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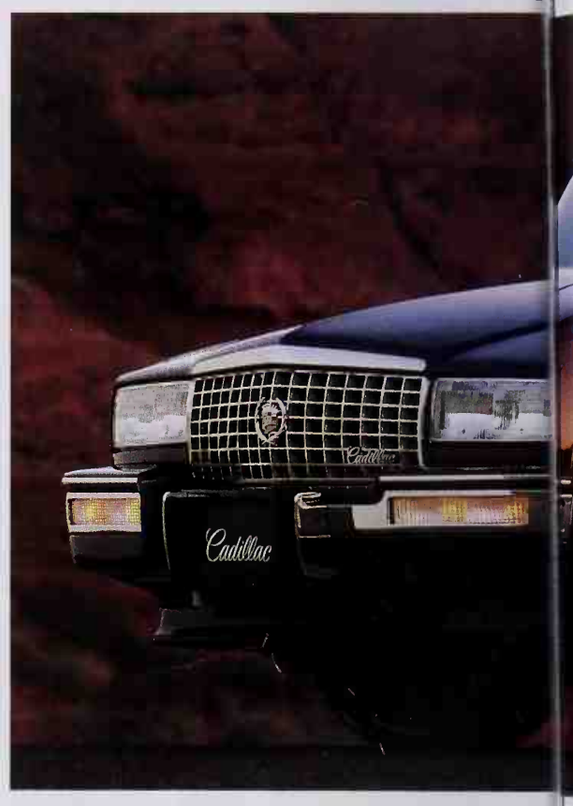

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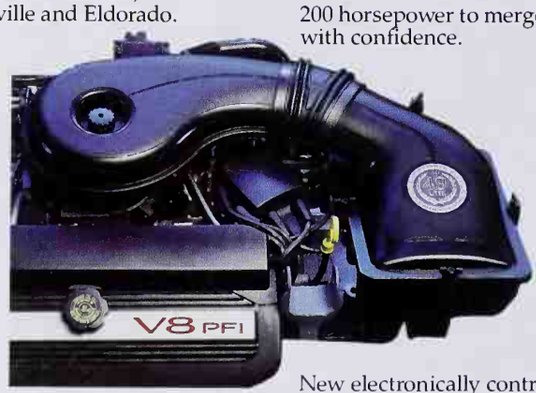

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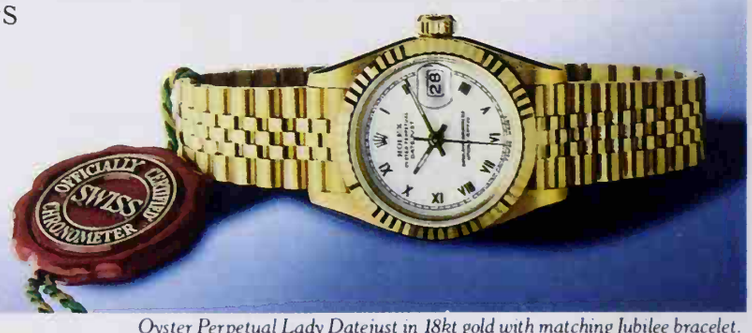

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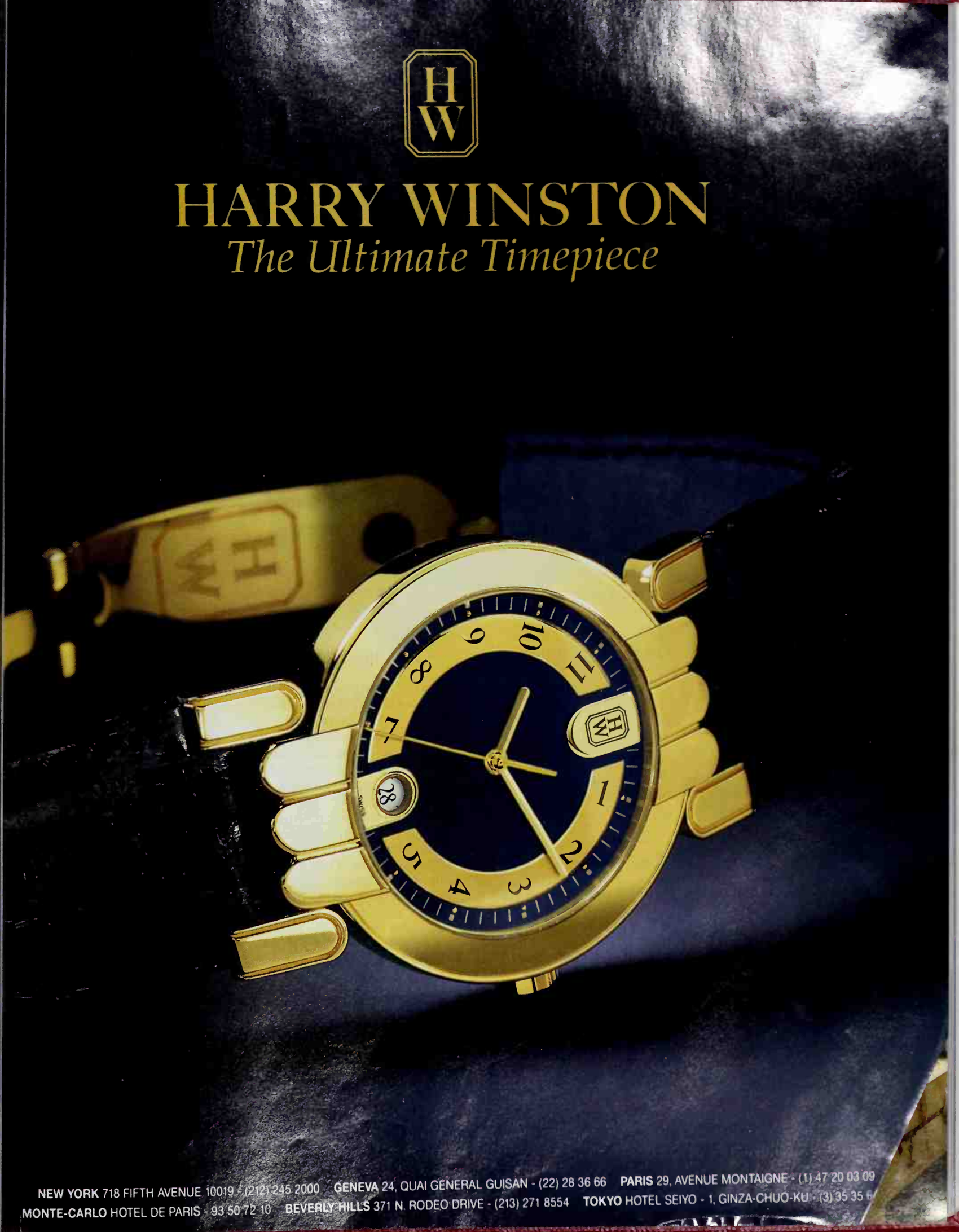
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LETTERS

Blondes and benne seeds

Not the Dumbest Blonde

Stefan Kanfer's "Frankenstein at Sixty" [January] repeats the apocryphal story that the actress Mae Clarke was the model for Lorelei Lee in *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*. Miss Clarke has steadfastly denied ever having met H. L. Mencken, who was the girl's escort, or Anita Loos, who described her as "the dumbest blonde of all," certainly not an apt description of Mae Clarke to anyone who has known her.

In fact, Miss Loos once stated that the first chapter of *Gentlemen* was sent to Mencken some time after it had been written. Mencken, in turn, responded that he would have published it in his new magazine the *American Mercury* but that he didn't want to "besmirch the first issue." The first issue of the *Mercury* appeared in January of 1924, at which time Mary Violet Klotz was, at the tender age of seventeen, attending dance school in Atlantic City.

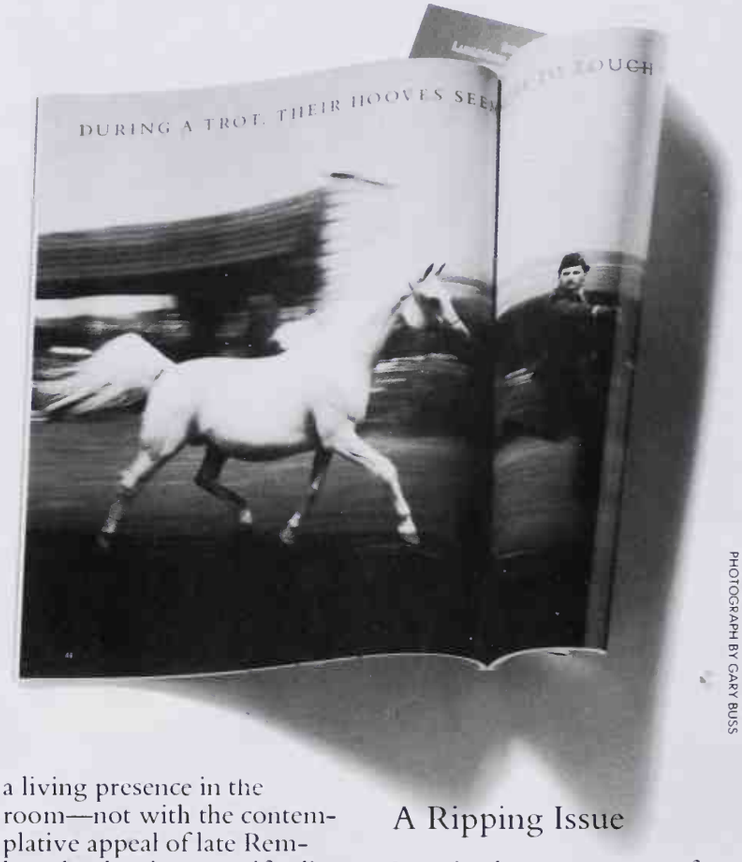
The entire episode is clearly a case of mistaken identity, which has dogged the undeserving Mae Clarke for almost as long as Jimmy Cagney's notorious grapefruit.

JAMES R. CURTIS
Brea, California

Juno's Honor

I wait for your magazine every month to bring a little consciousness of beauty into my life. I was puzzled and hurt by the article on Armand Hammer [January]. Puzzled by references to his late wife without any note of the death of the man himself. [The article went to press before Hammer's death.—Ed.] Hurt, yes, definitely, by the description of the Rembrandt *Juno* as "a unsuccessful work"!

Juno came to Atlanta's seum fourteen years n tell you she was



PHOTOGRAPH BY GARY BUSS

a living presence in the room—not with the contemplative appeal of late Rembrandts, but it was as if a diva had entered the room. The photograph you publish is a driver's-license likeness of her, no more. The rest of the issue was so nice I tried to let it rest, but the honor of a 300-year-old woman is no light thing.

JERRY ORR
Gainesville, Georgia

The Wrong Seed

In his review of Joe Allen's London restaurant [February], Bernard Merkel speaks of "so-called Benny wafers, delicious confections of caramelized sesame seeds." As an old Charlestonian, I beg to correct him. It is "benne seed," a form of wild sesame seed, which grows in the Carolina low country. The Junior League's *Charleston Receipts* offers numerous ways of using benne seed in many main dishes as well as candies and pastries.

ALLI BAIRD
Wilmington, Delaware

A Ripping Issue

I received my new copy of *Connoisseur* (February) this week and began to look through it. First I tore out the article about Poland's Arabian horses, for my nieces in Memphis who breed and show hunter-jumpers.

Then I tore out the article about Paul Ramer for my daughter in North Carolina, who skis a bit. Then I tore out the whole Bugatti article for my youngest son, who is a car freak, and for good measure included the first few pages of the Geoffrey Beene article, because of the picture of the Johnsons (as a child, he once visited Lady Bird at the ranch, with friends).

When I got through "reading" this issue, there wasn't much left but the cover. I *am* going back to read the Connoisseur Awards, and I don't think I need to send *it* on to anyone!

Good issue.

VIRGINIA W. HINES
Greenville, Mississippi

The Asian Leopard Cat

I have only now read "Rare Cats" [September]. For those of us who feel that our responsibility to the animal kingdom is one of stewardship rather than domination, the section on the so-called Bengal cat calls for response. As the author points out, the progenitors of the Bengal cat are the Asian leopard cat (*Felis bengalensis*); however, what she fails to mention is that this cat, an endangered species, is being illegally captured and transported in order to satisfy the appetite for exotic pets. Thus the "moral appeal" of this hybrid would seem to be a contradiction in terms.

We recently had an unexpected guest at Franklin Park Zoo, in Boston. In mid-August an Asian leopard cat was confiscated at Logan International Airport and brought to our zoo. Experience tells us that this small but majestic animal was intended for breeding purposes in the pet trade. Unfortunately there was no possibility of returning her to the wild, since there was no way to know just where she had been taken from.

The story has a relatively happy ending. In November the cat was sent to the Cincinnati Zoo, where she will have an appropriate home and be part of a captive-breeding program to help perpetuate this endangered species.

We should also remember that the number of unwanted domestic cats is overwhelming. In 1990 the Massachusetts SPCA received over 24,000 cats. Because homes could be found for only 4,300, the others had to be euthanized.

MARK GOLDSTEIN, D.V.M.,
FRANKLIN PARK ZOO
Boston, Massachusetts

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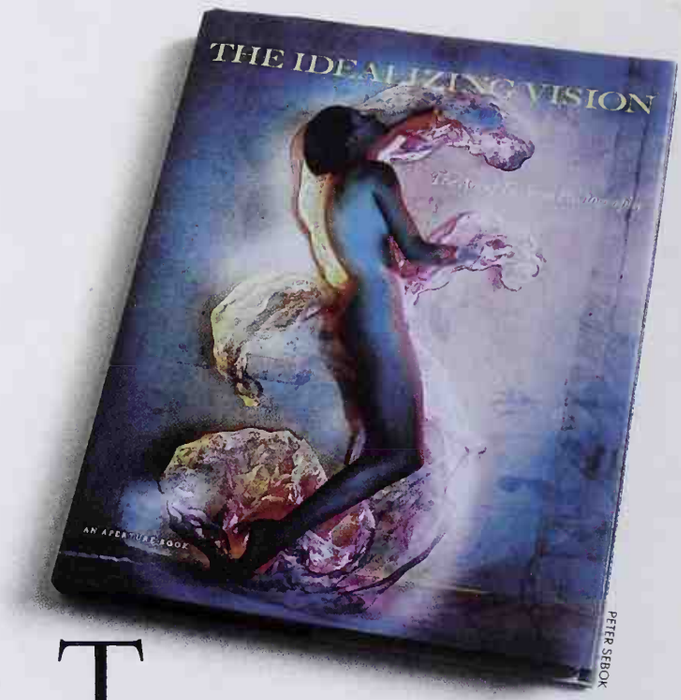
COURTESY THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, NEW YORK; GIFT OF THE ARTIST

No painter could have been more austere than Ad Reinhardt (1913–67), who strove for an art utterly free of representation. A retrospective will be seen at New York's Museum of Modern Art (May 30–September 2) and at Los Angeles's Museum of Contemporary Art (October 13–January 5).



PETER SEBOK

The fashion photograph is about a lot more than just clothes; it reflects and influences many aspects of our culture. A strikingly handsome book presents spectacular works by many of the greats, along with provocative essays touching on history, image making, sexuality. The Idealizing Vision: The Art of Fashion Photography *(Aperture, $35).*

After an absence of fifteen years, the Bolshoi Opera is back in America, with three spectacular productions. Top priority: Rimsky-Korsakov's *eye-and-ear-filling* Mlada. *At New York's Metropolitan Opera (June 15–July 6; 212-362-6000) and Wolf Trap, in Vienna, Virginia (July 11–15; 703-255-1868).*

COURTESY THE BOLSHOI OPERA

On Broadway, Tommy Tune reopens the palatial Palace Theatre directing The Will Rogers Follies, *wherein the sunny Will Rogers (Keith Carradine) stars in the tinsel night world of the Ziegfeld Follies. What a concept! (Opens May 1.)*

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COURTESY TOSHIBA AMERICA INFORMATION SYSTEMS, INC

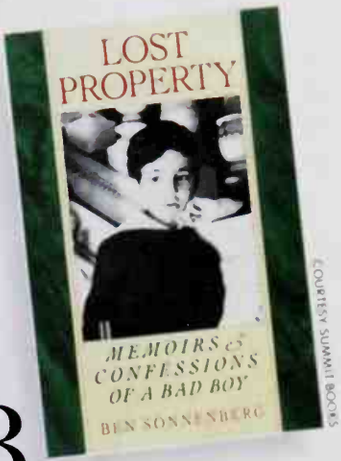
Electronic flash: a new notebook computer—Toshiba T2000SX—which runs longer and weighs less (under seven pounds) than any previous portable model. With full-size standard keyboard and side-lit black and white display, it is easy to use, if not so easy on the pocketbook—around $5,000.

ERIC KVALSVIK

The Walters Art Gallery, in Baltimore, holds the marvelous art collection amassed by an acquisitive father and son. Its palatial home was never big enough. On May 5 an old Baltimore mansion, revamped, will display the Walters Oriental art redeemed from years in storage.

JOHN CLIFFORD/TRI STAR PICTURES

See it at the movies next fall: Star talk-show host (Jeff Bridges) hits skids, is rescued by ex-prof turned street person (Robin Williams), in The Fisher King.



COURTESY SUMMIT BOOKS

Ben Sonnenberg, poet and playwright, who founded the literary quarterly Grand Street, *has unpacked his life in* Lost Property: Memoirs and Confessions of a Bad Boy *(Summit, $18.95). It is described as a mix of Boswell, Casanova, and Proust.*

SANDI HEDRICH

On Chicago's River North, Alessandra Branca has a three-story building stuffed with pretty trifles—antique prints with hand-painted mats and frames, and such (Branca Inc., 65 West Illinois Street; 312-822-0751.)

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WILLIAM STRUHS

Philip Glass and Allen Ginsberg's Hydrogen Jukebox.

"Howl" Set to Music?

A music-theater work by Philip Glass and Allen Ginsberg, *Hydrogen Jukebox*, swept through the Spoleto Festival U.S.A. like a benign hurricane. In a particularly rich season, *Jukebox* was the event that really mattered—the one offering that fueled passionate discourse in both the local nightclubs and the world press. There were some who disliked Ginsberg's manic, mantric poetry; others who dismissed Glass's obsessive musical reiterations; still others who rejected the work's jaundiced and generally gloomy overview of American society. But *Hydrogen Jukebox* could not be ignored: it was so unusual, so ambitious, so intensely *there* that one had to see it, hear it, form an opinion. On May 7, Jerome Sirlin's original production of *Hydrogen Jukebox* will come to the Brooklyn Academy of Music for six performances, and one suspects that at one point the discussion will only intensify.

The Glass-Ginsberg collaboration (neatly bisected into two fifty-minute acts) has been variously likened to a musicodramatic mosaic or quilt, a staged cantata, and—most appropriately, perhaps—a succession of distinct but interrelated songs, blasting from the speakers of an imaginary jukebox and choreographed accordingly. There is no all-encompassing "plot" to *Hydrogen Jukebox*. Rather, Glass has taken twenty-one of Ginsberg's poems (written over the course of the past four decades) and set them to some of the most variegated and virtuosic music of his career: elaborate arias and duets; vibrant choruses; squalling modern jazz; churchy cadences—even a concluding a cappella madrigal that calls to mind nothing so much as the parlor songs of the Civil War.

As for Ginsberg's texts, they are (to quote Anna Russell) "the sort of thing one likes if one likes that sort of thing." Topics include nuclear terror, Buddhist meditation, midwestern vistas, and political treachery (Mr. Ginsberg is not an admirer of Mr. Bush), all dished up in the poet's patented chanting, ranting, Whitman-wannabe style. But Glass's music accommodates with rare acuity Ginsberg's insistent rhythms and chains of flashing images. The production's six excellent singing actors double as acrobats; they strip, salute, hit the dirt, and bounce one another about the stage with dizzying vitality. Finally, Sirlin's tableaux are of unfailing visual distinction—from the bleak gray panoramas of incinerated Hiroshimas to the rhapsodies of starscape and blue cloud that serve as lyrical complements.

—TIM PAGE

Judy Davis Plays It Hot

Judy Davis is such a great actress that, whenever she strides on-screen in *Impromptu*, it is as if she had given this tidy, carefully appointed movie a good shaking up. As George Sand, the trailblazing nineteenth-century feminist author, who was equally notorious for her affairs with the poet Alfred de Musset (Mandy Patinkin) and with Frédéric Chopin (Hugh Grant), Davis is much too ardent for this musty movie. But, then again, in this depleted movie era, being too ferocious in subpar films is an occupational hazard of great actresses. With so few good roles at their disposal (and with many of the best of them going to Meryl Streep), most actresses of talent, in an effort to break through the crud, end

JEAN MARIE EBOY

Judy Davis makes like George Sand.

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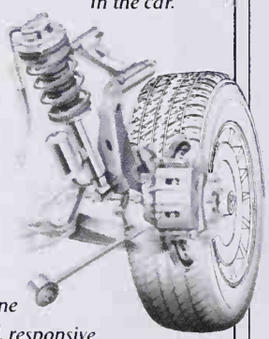

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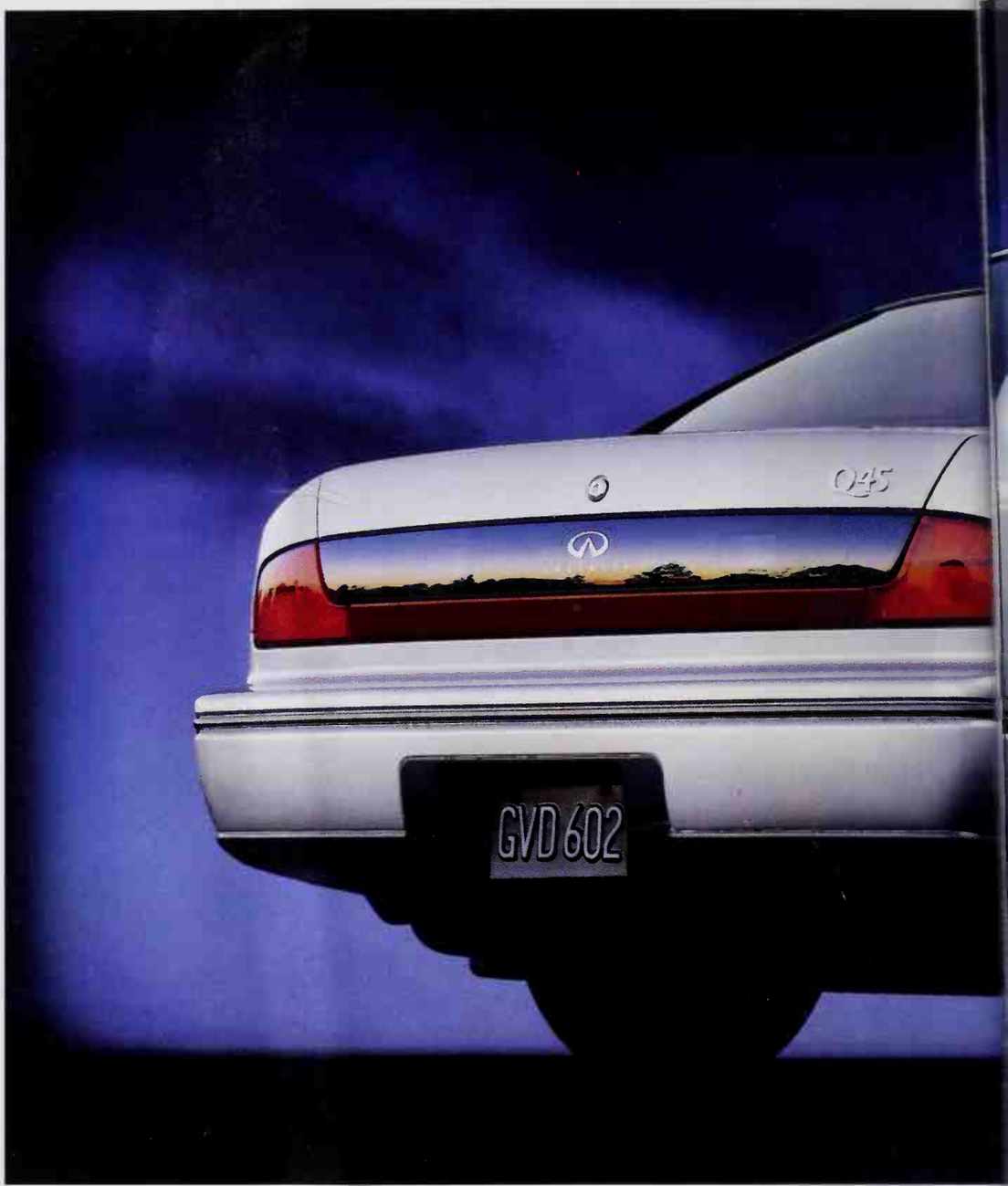

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After that happens, "almost" is the last word that comes to mind.

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up looking like tempestuous beasties. What else can they do with all that rage and emotion? Conceptually, at least, George Sand *is* the right sort of role for Davis. It allows for her fiery, unaccommodating bluntness and her fierce melancholy. Davis is one of the few current performers who radiate a palpable intelligence, and that is just right for Sand, whose dismissal of protocol was an act of sensibility and moral outrage. In the movie's terms, Sand's disdain for standard feminine fashion—she usually strode around in men's clothes—was a form of protection. It saved her for the things that really mattered to her: poetry and the affairs of the heart. Her single-minded pursuit of Chopin satisfied more than a lustful itch; his music tuned her own, discordant harmonies.

Impromptu should be much better than it is. James Lapine, the librettist for the Sondheim musicals *Sunday in the Park with George* and *Into the Woods,* directed; it also features Julian Sands as Liszt and Bernadette Peters as his mistress Marie d'Agoult. All to no particular avail, alas, but the film should be seen if only for Davis's hothouse presence. And if it inspires you to rent on videocassette the neglected 1987 Australian movie *High Tide,* where Davis gives one of the greatest performances on film, it will have all been worth it.

—PETER RAINER

Rooted in Nature

At age forty-nine, Itsuko Hasegawa is known as the most significant woman architect in Japan today. She belongs to the exclusive ranks of the third-generation avant-garde, and with the completion of the extraordinary Shonandai Cultural Center, in Fujisawa City, last year, she has suddenly become a major figure in the West.

Hasegawa has completed many other well-known projects in Japan, including Bizan Hall, in Shizuoka City, and the Stress Care Center, in the coastal city of Shiramine. Yet she remains an anomaly in a rigid architecture patriarchy.

COURTESY ITSUKO HASEGAWA (2)

Itsuko Hasegawa's complex at the Shonandai Cultural Center, in Fujisawa City: a "new" nature.

The legendary Tange, the godfather of all postwar Japanese architects, bequeathed his legacy to a tightly knit, all-male group that included Isozaki, Maki, and Shinohara. They in turn have been succeeded by a younger group of men—and by Hasegawa, Shinohara's disciple. Obviously at ease with her position, she says, "It is accepted that I, as a woman, would be on the outside of Japanese architecture. For a man to be on the outside would be more unusual. It would require great strength and energy."

Hasegawa, despite her light frame and soft features, has a strong and lively presence. She has used her unique credentials to try to reinvent the role of architecture in Japan, fearing that in the modern world building is more often than not a destructive act, one that emphasizes reason at the expense of the conflicting needs of human beings.

"The word 'development' once made me think of the expansion of mankind, the push westward in America, for example. Now, instead, the question has become, How do we build without being destructive to the earth?"

She also worries that things fall apart. During a recent visit to the United States for a university lecture tour, she lamented the decay she saw everywhere in New York City. "It was unsettling," she says, "to shoot up fifty stories on trembling elevators in these aging skyscrapers." She sees many of the futuristic projects being undertaken in land-scarce Japan today, like underground skyscrapers, as blueprints for disaster. "When I was walking on the Brooklyn Bridge, I was scared by the fact that such a huge edifice is not well maintained. I wondered, What will happen to the high-maintenance projects being built in Japan today? What will happen to them after a certain number of years, after Japan's economy has begun to flag?"

Which is not to say that Hasegawa's work is low-tech. Like her colleagues, she uses lightweight metals, perforated aluminum, and tension cables, as well as concrete and Kawara, a Japanese soft-clay tiling. What is different is that, rather than celebrating technological prowess, her buildings attempt to commemorate nature, often by mingling plants with the architectural elements, "to help create a 'new' nature in the place of the one that used to be there."

Hasegawa's winning entry for the 1985 Shonandai Cultural Center competition allowed her to test these notions on an enormous scale. Her initial plan was to preserve the surface area—an open field often used for traditional ceremonies—by sinking the mostly one-story structure into the ground. The completed complex, however, is dominated by two soaring, steel and aluminum globes that house much of the center's performance and work spaces. These imposing spheres seem alien apparitions, tethered yet floating in the site and constructed so that there is still public access to the area, through meandering walkways. "These globes grew up out of the ground," as if from the seeds of her ideas, Hasegawa says. "You see, a work that is not rooted directly in the earth becomes meaningless."

—NICOLAI OUROUSSOFF

Beauty Wakes Up Again

Serge Diaghilev was not interested in ballet as a young man. He cared about only music. (He meant to become a composer.) What converted him was *The Sleeping Beauty,* the great *ballet-féerie* (spectacle-ballet), with music by Tchaikovsky and choreography by Marius Petipa, which had its premiere in St. Petersburg in 1890. Some years later, it was Diaghilev's own production of *The Sleeping Beauty,* staged by his Ballets Russes in London in 1921, that won English audiences over to classical ballet. Later still, it was England's splendid *Sleeping Beauty,* created by the Royal Ballet on Diaghilev's model, that made ballet fans of thousands of Americans when the company toured here, with young Margot Fonteyn as Aurora (the Beauty), in the 1950s. The critic André Levinson was taken to see it on his fourth birthday. "That very day, I had the revelation of classical dancing," he later said. *The Sleeping Beauty* gathers the entire history of twentieth-century ballet in its train.

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In the last few decades, however, the ballet has fallen on hard times. The Royal's version has petered out stylistically. The Kirov version looks lusterless, underpowered. Several American companies have staged *Beauty*s in recent years, but none with great success. It may be that the meanings of this ballet—that goodness will naturally triumph in the end, that it is nice to be upper-class—elude today's dancers.

Undaunted, Peter Martins, ballet master-in-chief of New York City Ballet, is now staging a *Sleeping Beauty*. George Balanchine, who founded NYCB, always talked of putting on this ballet. But there is not much in life that is more expensive than this four-act court ballet, and that fact, among others, has always gotten in the way.

Martins's long-awaited production, designed by David Mitchell (sets) and Patricia Zipprodt (costumes), will be a streamlined version—two acts in two hours, with most of the choreography by Martins—but the great set pieces will be there: the Fairy Variations, the Rose Adagio, the Grand Pas de Deux.

There will also be things that were present in the original but missing from many later productions. The Prince and the Lilac Fairy will sail up a river to Aurora's castle (and not, as is the current, low-budget practice, just into a dry-ice fog bank). And the great Garland Waltz, which opens the princess's fateful birthday party, will include real children (from the School of American Ballet), just as it did in 1890.

That waltz is the only part of the production that is Balanchine's; he made it in 1981, remembering what he could from the Petipa version. When you see those children come streaming downstage in their little shoes, remember that Balanchine was once one of them. This was the first dance he ever performed in a theater—he was ten—and it persuaded him not to quit ballet school after all. "That evening changed my whole life," he once said. Accordingly, it changed the course of twentieth-century art.

The NYCB *Sleeping Beauty* opens April 24 and runs for fifteen performances. If you have your choice of Auroras, try for Darci Kistler, Kyra Nichols, or Nichol Hlinka.

—JOAN ACOCELLA

PHOTOGRAPH BY ISAIAH WYNER

The Ross Park carousel, in Broome County, New York: all jumpers.

Carousel Heaven

Only about eighty carousels still operate in the United States, and of these, six are in one county—Broome—in upstate New York. They were purchased between 1919 and 1930 from the Allan Herschell Companies, in North Tonawanda, New York, by George F. Johnson, a New York State shoe manufacturer.

Believing that a healthy, happy work force would increase productivity, Johnson instituted social and health programs and built houses to sell to employees. His desire to provide them with recreation—especially carousels—stemmed from a childhood of such poverty that he had no pocket money for a ride to the sound of a military-band organ on gaily painted horses bobbing up and down. He vowed that, if ever he had money, no other child would experience that disappointment. Since the day the carousels began arriving in Broome County, rides for children of all ages have been free.

There is one carousel in each of six Broome County municipal parks. The Ross Park and Recreation Park carousels still use their original, Wurlitzer military-band organs. Except for the carousels in Highland and West Endicott parks, which have a dog and a boar each, all the carousel figures are horses and all are jumpers. It is related that, once, George F. (as they call him) saw a little girl crying because she had not gotten to ride a jumping horse. He decided then and there that all his horses must be jumpers.

Although the carousels have been well cared for over the years, horses have been painted the wrong colors, lights removed, brass poles painted over. All six are being considered for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places, and several are being restored. At Recreation Park, not only the figures but the entire structure will be restored at a cost of approximately $250,000.

Last July, a carousel museum opened at Ross Park. Until recently an ugly, windowless utility building, it has been painted with trompe l'oeil windows, doors, and climbing vines.

All six of Broome County's carousels are enclosed and operate from Memorial Day to Labor Day. *(Broome County Chamber of Commerce, P.O. Box 995, Binghamton, NY 13902; 607-772-8860.)*

—RONDA ENGMAN

COURTESY CHRIS ROBERTS-ANTIEAU

Pretty Crafty

3 Ring Circus is a folding screen made of wood and fabric by Chris Roberts-Antieau, and along with the work of 118 other crafts people it will be shown at the Seventh Regiment Armory, in New York, from May 10 to 12. A day before it opens, on the ninth, there will be a gala benefiting the American Craft Museum and Design Industries Foundation for AIDS. *(American Craft at the Armory; 800-836-3470.)*

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School of American Ballet student performance. Merrill Ashley. Copyright Martha Swope, 1967.

Thanks to the Library, American dance has taken great leaps forward.

American dance is more popular than ever, and one of the reasons is The New York Public Library's Dance Collection.

Choreographer Eliot Feld says the Library at Lincoln Center is "as vital a workroom as my studio." Agnes de Mille says, "the revival of any work is dependent on access to the Library's Dance Collection."

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WHERE THE FUTURE IS AN OPEN BOOK

The Perfect Mint Julep

The method for concocting the perfect mint julep, the legendary drink of the South, is highly debatable. No two southerners can agree on just how the drink should be made, and few northerners ever have given a damn one way or the other. A pity, since the drink is an antidote to a sweltering day. The basics are the same (whiskey, sugar, and mint), but the subtleties vary: glass mugs or silver cups; straws or not? With all apologies to Churchill Downs, where a record number of premixed mint juleps is sold each successive Derby day, the best way to taste a julep is in someone's home, and if you have no southern friends to make one for you, take to the bar yourself.

First, crush plenty of ice. Then gather a good handful of mint and wash it. The kind grown in the backyard, preferably that near a constant source of trickling water, is best—or near a bucket that the bird dog drinks out of, since bird dogs' jowls are the right size to displace enough water to keep the mint full and fragrant. If you have no yard or dog, then get your mint, fresh and unblemished as possible, at the corner store. Then get some sugar. Powdered sugar is fine, since you will have to dissolve it and you won't want to stand over a hot stove when it is hot enough for mint juleps. Set out a good bottle of bourbon, preferably from Virginia or Kentucky, or a good bottle of Tennessee sour mash, a little water, often called branch water in the South for the stream from which it was siphoned, and a small bowl.

Into the bowl put a palmful of mint leaves per drink, two spoonfuls of sugar, and just enough water to make a light syrup. Now mash the leaves with a wooden spoon. This is called muddling the mint. After a pleasant sufficiency of juleps, some people say "middling the mutt," and others cannot speak at all. Put this

PHOTOGRAPH BY E. K. WALLER; STYLIST, JILL SHARP MILLER

For the perfect mint julep, take whiskey, sugar, mint, and ice.

mixture into the refrigerator until you are ready to use it. Then pack the vessels you have chosen full of ice. If you choose glass mugs, they will not frost properly and will just drip all over your seersuckers anyway. You really want silver cups of the heirloom variety, since dings and nicks in old silver add a certain credibility to mint juleps as the drink of southern aristocrats. Set the ice-filled cups on a wooden board to keep them frosty, divide the mint mixture among them, and fill them with bourbon. Stir well, garnish with a sprig of mint, and serve with a plate of Smithfield-ham biscuits, the saltiness of which will cut the sweetness of the drink. Mint juleps are not sissy drinks and have been known to put three-hundred-pound men well back into wicker rockers.

—TERRELL VERMONT

Saint Catherine Comes Home

Last January 11, in an unprecedented act on behalf of the Italian Ministry of Culture, Antonio Paolucci, the fine-arts superintendent of Florence, purchased Raphael's *Saint Catherine of Alexandria* at a Christie's auction in New York for a record auction price of $1.65 million. A partially damaged, thirty-by-fifteen-inch tempera on wood, originally painted as part of a three-panel altarpiece, *Saint Catherine* had belonged to the noble Florentine family Contini-Bonacossi and more recently to the late Philippine despot Ferdinand Marcos. Florence, Perugia, and Urbino are vying for the painting.

Italy's aggressive venture into the international art market signals a sharp turn in the nation's often ineffectual attempts to consolidate its artistic heritage. With its limited resources, Italy's state art bureaucracy cannot hope to compete with private collectors and museums. Indeed, at the same Christie's auction, a Swiss dealer purchased Titian's *Portrait of Giulio Romano* for $1.1 million, outbidding a delegation from Romano's adoptive city, Mantua.

Still, the acquisition of the

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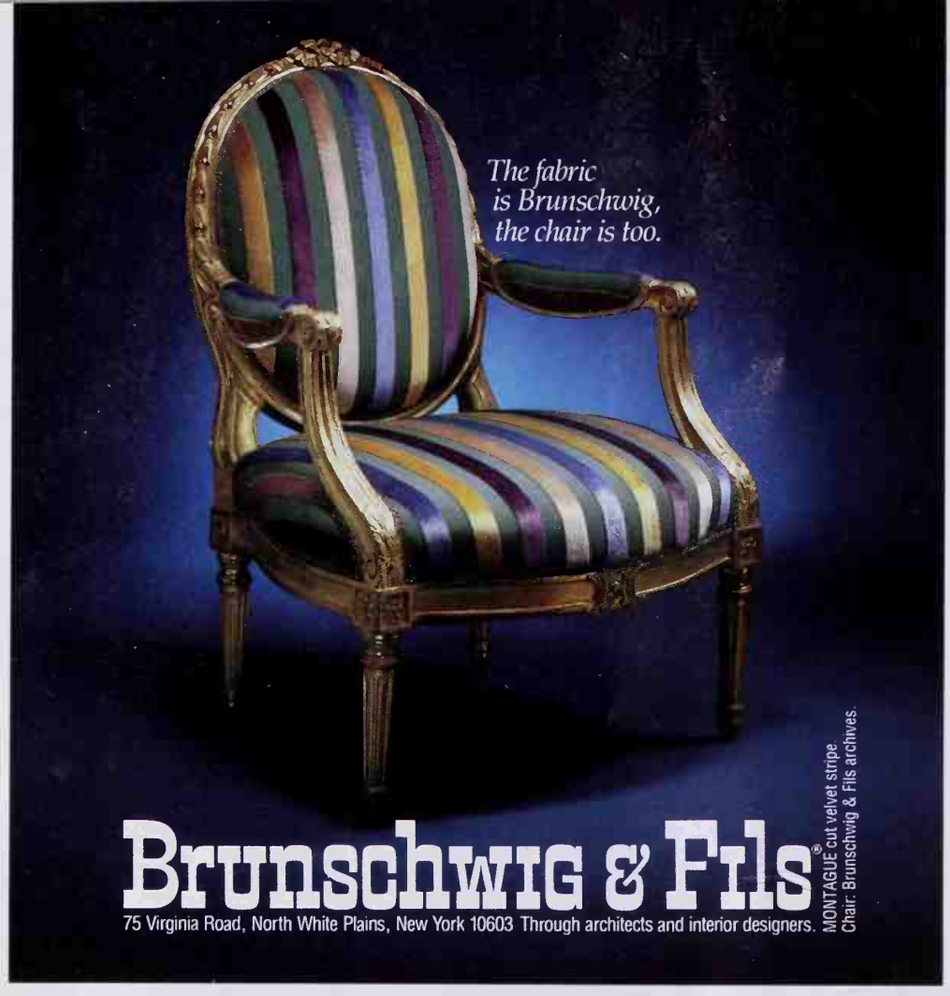
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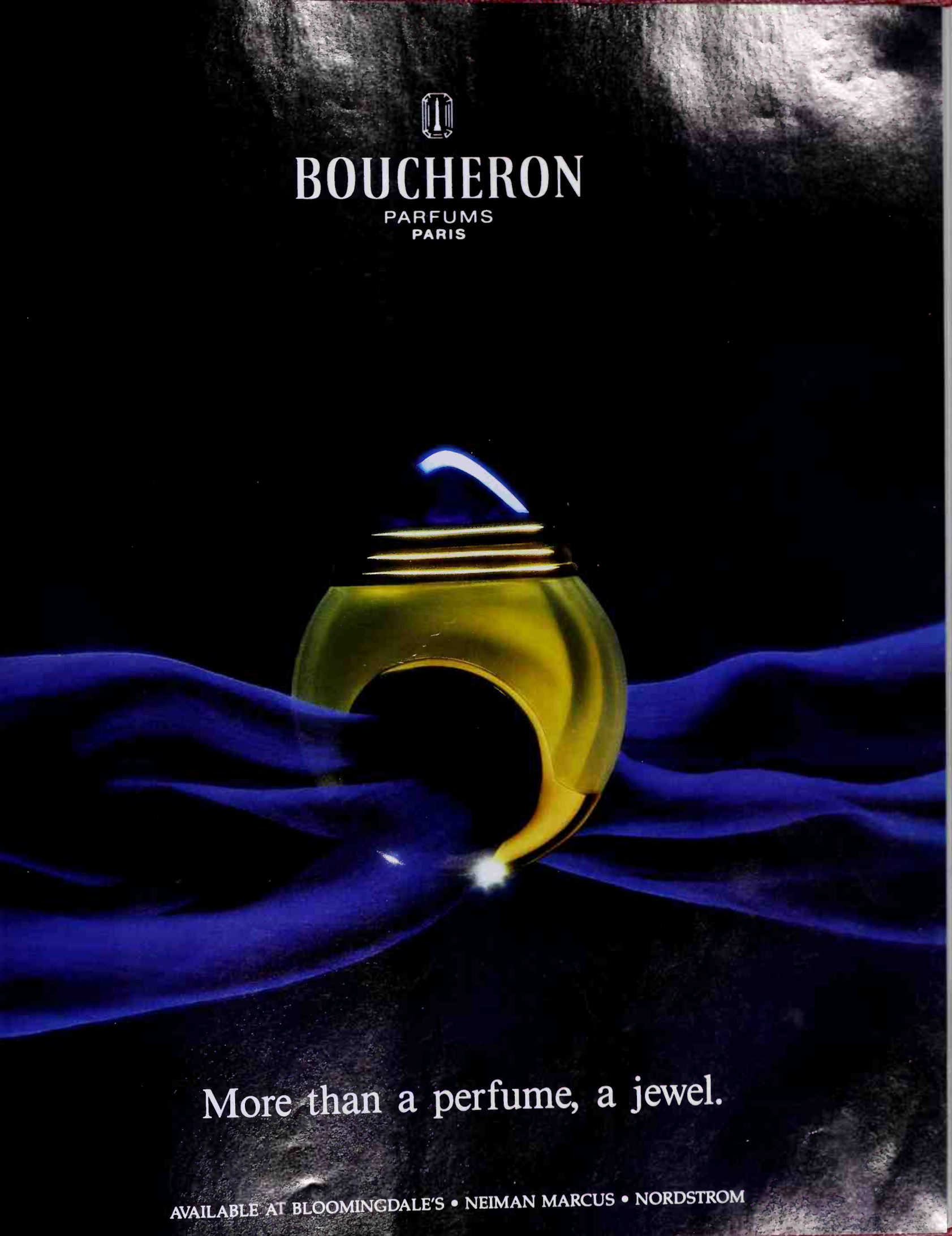
COURTESY CHRISTIE'S NEW YORK

Raphael's record Saint Catherine.

Raphael does indicate that the Italian fine-arts establishment is scrambling to put its house in order. Just one year hence, after all, the European unification of 1992 will become a reality, and Italian arts officials fear it will deplete the country's considerable artistic patrimony by facilitating the exportation of its national treasures. —KENNETH R. SHULMAN

London Gallery Report

Anyone who loves chairs (see page 58) should visit Fischer Fine Art (30 King Street, SW1) to see "Pioneers of Modern Furniture." It runs from April 24 to May 31 and traces the evolution of twentieth-century furniture, showing how each piece embodies a design philosophy. The earliest chair (1898), delicately symmetrical, was designed by Adolf Loos; the most recent is by Joe Colombo (1968), who used molded plastic and soft materials. The highlight is Le Corbusier's chaise longue (1928), the bent, chromed tubular-steel and leather classic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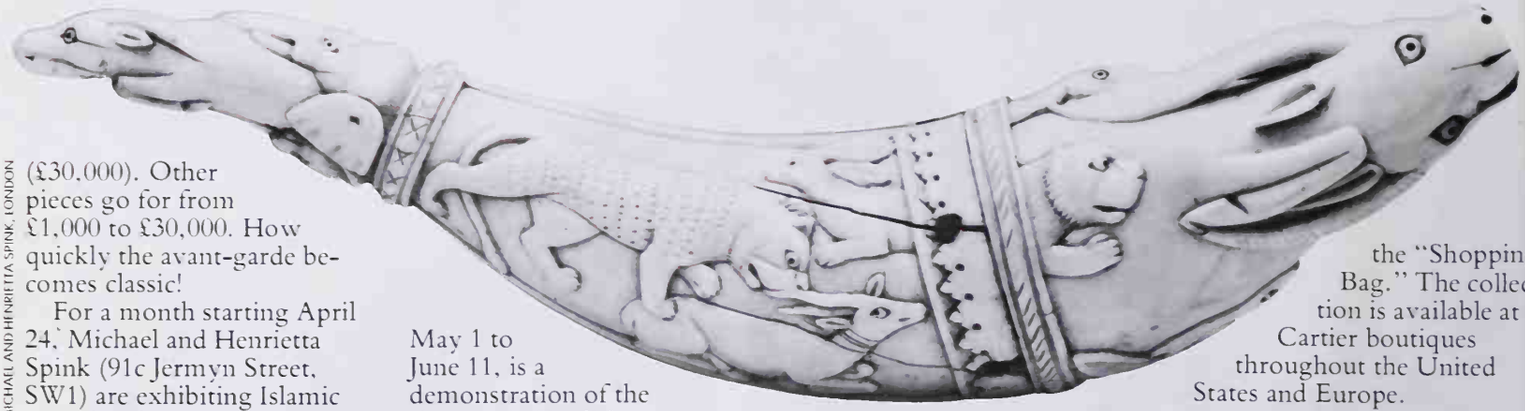

COURTESY MICHAEL AND HENRIETTA SPINK, LONDON

See it in London: a seventeenth-century Mogul ivory powder horn.

(£30,000). Other pieces go for from £1,000 to £30,000. How quickly the avant-garde becomes classic!

For a month starting April 24, Michael and Henrietta Spink (91c Jermyn Street, SW1) are exhibiting Islamic art. The objects are mainly small, colorful, extremely pretty, and made for the wealthy elite of Ottoman Turkey, Safavid Persia, or Mogul India. A particularly attractive piece is the early-seventeenth-century Mogul traveling chest, with several long drawers that suggest it was used for transporting jewelry. Inlaid with colored woods and ivory, it depicts male and female figures, some on horseback, others standing among trees with birds and flowers. Prices range from £500 to £30,000.

Garrard, the crown jewelers since 1843 (112 Regent Street, W1), is staging "Royal Goldsmiths," an exhibition of the firm's antique silver, from May 14 to June 8. Garrard has been at the center of the silver trade since its founding, in 1735, and the show offers an opportunity to trace the development of English silver design over 250 years. Apart from the loan exhibition, which includes a magnificent centerpiece by George Wickes belonging to the queen, an eighteenth-century gold box presented by Queen Victoria, and sporting trophies such as the America's Cup, designed by Robert Garrard in 1848, there is also a wide range of antique silver that is for sale, ranging in price from £100 to £200,000.

At Artemis (15 Duke Street, Saint James's, SW1) another silver-related exhibition runs from May 15 to June 12. The recently discovered Valadier Album consists of over 100 drawings done between 1720 and 1820 by the Valadiers, a Rome-based family of gold- and silversmiths.

"The Painted Word," at the Heim Gallery (59 Jermyn Street, SW1), running from May 1 to June 11, is a demonstration of the changes in English taste during the eighteenth century. Increased prosperity, worldwide naval and military superiority, and a newfound sense of national pride and identity stimulated the new rich to commission subjects that showed off their achievements and those of their country. Historical drawings and paintings by such as Romney, Reynolds, and Benjamin West (the American who became history painter to George III) served as models for prints; the Heim Gallery illustrates their interdependence. Prices range from £5,000 to £250,000.

—VANESSA CLEWES-SALMON

Cartier's Missing Black Bag

A black handbag should not really cause a lot of hoopla. Yet when Cartier recently unveiled its latest line of leather bags, a shiny black panther cub was on hand to give the hundreds of guests something to talk about.

Why all the excitement? Black is back at Cartier. Well, not exactly back. Until now, Cartier has never made anything in black leather. Navy blue and bordeaux, yes, but no black. It is hard to believe that Cartier, which has been famous for exquisite luxury products since 1847, has held out on black—and especially, of all things, the little black bag—for so long. And gotten away with it.

Called the Panther Bag Collection, this new Cartier line, in black calf leather, is inspired by the company's famous panther design, popularized by the duchess of Windsor in the 1940s. Each of the nine Panther styles, in fact, closes with a stylized gold panther that curls tightly around a gold button or forms a wide, graceful ring. The Panther bags are more rounded and streamlined than Cartier's traditional leather products and—except for the "Drawstring Bag"—are based on the sleek, compact form of the envelope. They are lined in bright blue, red, or green leather and come complete with a coordinating change purse and a gold key-ring clip.

The "Shopping Bag," the largest handbag in the Panther collection, has a wide double shoulder strap and room for just about everything, while the elegant "Duchess Clutch," named after the duchess of Windsor, works easily for either day or night. No man would be caught dead with the Panther briefcase, a practical, ample, and ultrafeminine bag.

Prices for the Panther bags range from $850, for the small "Duchess Clutch," to $1,400, for the "Drawstring" and "Satchel" bags, to $1,950, for the "Shopping Bag." The collection is available at Cartier boutiques throughout the United States and Europe.

—CATHY COOK

COURTESY CARTIER

Cartier finally produces a little black bag, the Panther classic.

Museum Strikes It Rich

Like middle-size museums everywhere, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art has not much to spend on building its permanent collection, though it makes up in quality for what it lacks in scope.

Shortly after announcing plans for its new building, the SFMMA got a substantial bequest from the late Elise Stern Haas (1893-1990), a descendant of Levi Strauss. She left the museum some thirty-three works—said to be worth about $40 million—by Monet, Matisse, Derain, Picasso, Brancusi, Gris, Arp, and other giants of modern art.

The centerpiece of the bequest is Matisse's *Femme au Chapeau* (1905), painted with the vibrant, arbitrary color that outraged the art public of 1905. That same year, the term "Fauvism" was coined as a slur on such works and the Cézannesque oil *Study for La Joie de Vivre* (1905), also part of the Haas gift.

The bequest reunites Matisse's 1916 portrait of Sarah Stein with the pendant picture of her husband, Michael (Gertrude's brother), that came to the SFMMA through an earlier gift. Elise Haas, a close friend

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SAN FRANCISCO MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Matisse's Femme au Chapeau *(1905): outrageous colors.*

of the Steins, bought several Matisses from them, including Sarah's portrait.

The San Francisco Modern already owned a number of fine works from the glory days of analytic and synthetic cubism but nothing so essential as the 1907 Picasso gouache study for a figure in *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* given by Haas. The face in the study bears a strong family resemblance to those in the epochal painting.

The key sculptures in the bequest are Brancusi's polished bronze *La Négresse Blonde* (1926), one of three or four casts, and a tiny Matisse bronze, the 1906 *Petite Tête aux Cheveux Strilles*.

Not everything in the Haas gift is of stellar quality, but the more important objects refine and deepen the museum's modest but distinguished twentieth-century-art collection. —KENNETH BAKER

"My Tiny Museum"

"There are a lot of shows that the museums just aren't doing," says the veteran art dealer Richard Feigen. "In my space I will make some of the statements that need to be made." He is talking about his new gallery, a five-story town house at 49 East Sixty-eighth Street, in Manhattan, a landmark building containing some 13,000 square feet of floor space, including a research library and a sculpture garden. Feigen calls it "my own tiny, little museum."

He has the inventory with which to create diverse exhibitions. His gallery in Chicago specializes in contemporary art; his London gallery is devoted to the old masters; and in New York he keeps works spanning five centuries of art history. And he knows where to borrow other masterpieces for his New York shows.

Should all go well, works from the Tate and the Louvre may soon be hanging on Feigen's walls. "We're talking to a very important artist," he says, "who may curate a show based on his wish list of works we'd borrow from museums and private collections.""Maybe all this is madness," Feigen muses, but even in hard times there is money around. "I'm perfectly willing for the old masters, the Impressionists, and the twentieth-century classics I sell to subsidize the presentation of my new ideas." —KATE NEISSER

Thinking in Steel

Daniel Barrett, an erudite, sixty-two-year-old sculptor, has been a world traveler, an innkeeper, an artisan, and the inventor of energy-related innovations that won him the Department of Energy's 1983 "Inventor of the Year" award. He is also an artist who for over forty years has stubbornly pursued his destiny largely outside the art-world mainstream. The show of his recent sculpture opening at New York City's ACA Galleries on May 23 is only his second one-man exhibition in New York. The first was twenty-three years ago. In the interim, Barrett's work was forgotten, but what the current show, of a dozen of his lyrical new works, reveals is that he is one of the best American sculptors still dealing with great modernist issues.

JERRY THOMPSON/COURTESY ACA GALLERIES, N.Y.C.

Crescendo #8, *a steel sculpture by Daniel Barrett, in a show at ACA Galleries.*

Even in 1968, Barrett, by then a veteran of three continents and many cultures, seems to have had little patience with the art world. He left Manhattan to live and work in upstate New York.

Starting a new life has become a habit with this artist. Born in Ireland in 1929, Barrett apprenticed as a carpenter, a blacksmith, and a silversmith. By the time he moved to London, in 1947, and enrolled in university, he was already an accomplished artisan. Finding his studies at the Slade and the University of London restrictive, Barrett quickly dropped out and, in 1949, left England to work as a sculptor in Africa. Later, he traveled the continent extensively. Africa was his base until 1956, when he went to Brasília to execute a sculpture commissioned by the government. The next few years found him in London, Paris, Amsterdam, and Frankfurt. In 1961 he moved to Israel, where he adopted an Israeli name (Ben-Shmuel) to honor his Jewish mother and received several commissions for public sculpture. In 1966 he and his family arrived in Manhattan.

After the move upstate, Barrett continued making monumental sculptures (one of them sits by the New York State Thruway near Albany). His working procedures remain intuitive and hands-on. His new studio, in Schenectady, is in a former garment factory. He has made it into a virtual machinist's shop, with a three-story working space and numerous bays, in which his work of the past thirty years is displayed.

He has moved from a monumental geometry to a more personal, lyrical vocabulary that evokes elements of nature. His newest works suggest forests and trees, with the hundreds of small parts making up a dense whole.

There is a bit of Rip Van Winkle about this artist, but he probably will not remain unknown. The museum at Cornell is already planning a retrospective of his work for next year. —ALEXANDRA ANDERSON-SPIVY

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AUCTIONS

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Beckmann's Türkenbundilien, *1937. Sotheby's Berlin; estimate: DM 1,000,000–DM 1,250,000.*

Twice yearly, just before Christmas and again this month, the major houses put on a shameless festival of elegance, although they *call* it the Geneva sales of silver, objects of vertu, miniatures, watches and timepieces, Fabergé, and majestic jewelry. Phillips's sale on the 14th, of European *silver and objects of vertu,* features a spectacular selection of absolutely voluptuous seventeenth- through nineteenth-century snuffboxes and étuis, many estimated at mid-four-figure sums. At the other extreme, on the 16th, Christie's presents over seventy pieces of simply stunning seventeenth- through nineteenth-century *Indian jewelry.* What an extraordinary treat: fine gold mounts, huge colored stones, diamonds, pearls, polychrome Jaipur enameling—all of an exquisite and exotic beauty that makes the expected SF 2 million–plus believable. Christie's holds more-modest sales of *traditional jewelry* this month in Amsterdam, the 29th, and Rome, the 30th.

The two-session sale of *important estate jewelry* at New York's William Doyle Galleries, on the 22nd, is not in the same class but just as popular with buyers, who actually wear what they buy instead of keeping it at the bank. By holding only three jewelry sales a year, Doyle saves up the best *bijoux* from the private estates. A combination of low to no reserves, affordability, wearability, and popular makers (Cartier, Van Cleef, Tiffany, et al.) has been a winner. Cleverly, Doyle pairs major evening sales of *modern and European painting and sculpture* with the daytime jewelry sessions. The evening of the 22nd, one of the best of the bunch may be John Graham's *Egg and Hat Rack* (estimated at $30,000–$50,000).

The Sotheby's New York sale of *nineteenth-century European paintings,* on the 22nd, presents a period survey of signature works by such as Boldini, Corot, and the surprisingly popular Sorolla y Bastida, whose impressionistic painting of children on a beach wistfully watching a passing sailboat could top $1 million.

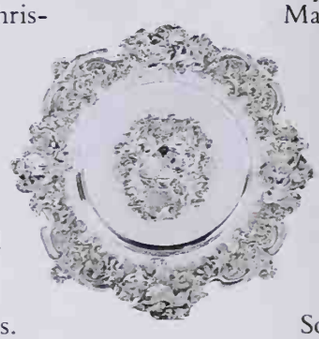
The next day, Christie's offers its third annual session of *Barbizon, realist, and French landscape painting.* Despite complaints that this was too narrow a field to sustain collector interest, Christie's stuck to its guns. It has done a terrific job of making the material accessible in catalogs with scholarly articles on the period and its movements, biographies, and notes on paintings. The better-known artists this time include Breton, Corot, Courbet, Rousseau, and Troyon. The high-five- to low-six-figures estimates are not unreasonable.

Sotheby's has decided to hold its inaugural sale of *twentieth-century German art* on the 30th in Berlin, believing that the city is set to regain its eminence in the art market. Many represented in this firs sale have well-established international reputations: Beckmann, Grosz, Münter, Schlemmer, Schrimpf. Before the sale, a selection of the ma terial will be exhibited in Vienna, Cologne, Frankfurt, Munich, Hamburg, and Zurich.

In London on the 22nd, Bonhams holds its tenth annual *flowers and garden auction,* to coincide with the Chelsea Flower Show. As always, this sale is a cornucopia of things associated with gardens and gardening, especially prints, paintings, books and albums, china, silver, textiles, and more. The previous day Bonhams offers garden and conservatory furniture, architectural fittings, and statuary. Phillips and Sotheby's have gotten into gardenware too. On the 7th, at Capesthorne Hall, Macclesfield, Cheshire, Phillips offers somewhat more and better material than Bonhams, and one can examine it in actual garden settings. The grandest garden sale will be the Sotheby's sessions the 29th and 30th, at Summers Place, Billingshurst, West Sussex. It seems odd that these sales are held on weekdays, when they could have made for a jolly weekend in the country.

The books and manuscripts market avoids headlines unless something like a previously "lost" autograph copy of Mozart's Fantasia and Sonata in C

COURTESY WILLIAM DOYLE GALLERIES, NEW YORK



Right: Gold bangle bracelet, $1,200–$1,800. Far right: Silver dish by Paul de Lamerie, 1736. Estimate: £1 million.

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AUCTIONS

Minor sells for £880,000, as it did at Sotheby's last year. Both Sotheby's and Christie's have major London sales this month. On the 1st, Christie's will offer *travel, natural-history, and early printed books* from the sixteenth century on, with richly, often lavishly illustrated nineteenth-century travel and related natural-history volumes, such as Roberts's six-volume *The Holy Land, Egypt and Nubia* and Thornton's *Temple of Flora* (each estimated at £40,000 to £60,000). On the 16th, Sotheby's offers *Continental books and manuscripts,* with an autograph manuscript of Turgenev's short story "Lieutenant Ergunov's Story," estimated at £70,000 to £80,000.

To take advantage of the expected crowds at the annual International Toy and Doll Fair, the 18th through the 19th in London, Phillips has scheduled a sale of *toys and dolls* on the 22nd. There are fine French and Continental dolls, a set of cloth Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs figures, and some classic British and German wind-up toys, plus some Japanese battery-operated robots from the 1950s.

On the 22nd in London, Christie's presents the superb *English silver collection* of the late Norwegian shipping magnate Hilmar Reksten. Its spectacular 400 pieces represent a nearly complete survey of the work of the top English goldsmiths—including ten pieces by de Lamerie alone. The grandest single item is his 272-ounce "Maynard" sideboard dish, of 1736. It may fetch more then £1 million. Additional lots will be sold at South Kensington on the 24th and in King Street in July.

Butterfield & Butterfield's Los Angeles rooms will be the site of another fascinating *estate sale,* on May 6th, that of the Beverly Hills heiress Dolly Green. The material offered is the contents of her sumptuous Bel Air mansion, reflecting the highly decorative, Europeanized tastes of many Americans with too much money. Her outstanding jewelry is being sold separately in June. Proceeds go to charity.

—JAMES R. LYONS

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Illustrated: Portrait of Colonel David Markham by Sir Thomas Lawrence, PRA (1765-1830), who was one of the most remarkable painters of his age. His dazzling, romantic style is the epitome of Regency glamour. 1793. Oil on canvas, 125 × 94.5 cm.
Colnaghi, 14 Old Bond Street, London W1X 4JL. Tel: (071) 491 7408. 21 East 67th Street, New York, NY 10021. Tel: (212) 772 2266. 112 rue du Fbg. Saint-Honoré, Paris 75008. Tel: (1) 45 62 85 66.

Bernheimer Fine Arts of London and Bernheimer Kunsthandel of Munich are delighted to be able to exhibit a fine display of Japanese porcelain in keeping with this year's theme. In addition, more usual Bernheimer items, such as Chinese porcelain, European furniture and Works of Art, selected Old Masters, and Oriental and European carpets and textiles will also be displayed. Bernheimer has had a long established reputation, since 1864, for catering for an essentially European taste.
Illustrated: A pair of large "Kraak" style Arita blue and white chargers. The central roundel containing branches of pomegranates surrounded by alternate panels of Buddhist emblems and stylised flowerheads and foliage linked by narrower panels of a single flower head. Japan, Late 17th Century, Diam: 55.5cm.
Bernheimer Fine Arts Ltd, 32 St George Street, London W1R 9FA. Tel: (071) 499 0293 Fax: (071) 409 1814. Stand No. 13.

It is interesting to note how successful businesses move from plateau to plateau, what particular quirks of fate cause the indefinable leap to enduring success. **Norman Adams** wished his business to be known not just as a supplier of fine English furniture but as an unrivalled supplier of a period of unquestioned quality in English furniture. Norman Adams' answer was to build up a business dealing only with private collectors. So something over thirty years ago the die was cast and no more dealing was done with United Kingdom trade. At the time it must have seemed foolhardy. But now, that decision has proved very farsighted and Norman Adams is renowned for providing the finest English furniture

available, a tradition continued by his son-in-law, Stewart Whittington, and his co-director Christopher Claxton Stevens.
Illustrated: An outstanding George III mahogany serpentine bombé commode in French taste, circa 1775. Height 32" (81.5cms), width 46" (116.5cms), Depth 20½" (58.5cms). Literature: Eighteenth Century English Furniture – The Norman Adams Collection pp.388-9. Exhibiting Grosvenor House Antiques Fair, Stand 41. 1991 colour catalogue of recent acquisitions $15.00 (Quote C.M.).

Norman Adams, 8-10 Hans Road, London SW3 1RX. Opposite west side of Harrods. Tel: (071) 589 5266 Fax: (071) 589 1968.

Didier Aaron (London) will be showing this games table at the 1991 Grosvenor House Antiques Fair. It is painted with the coats of arms of the Umfraville family from the Norman Conquest to about 1825, when this table was made. They came to England with William the Conqueror, became Earls of Angus in the 13thC, and it records all the marriage alliances of the Umfravilles for twenty two generations. The final square records the marriage of the last Umfraville Heiress with a member of the de Vere family, Earls of Oxford. Two green velvet-lined drawers at either end of the table contain a contemporary red and white ivory chess set beautifully carved matching the high quality of the cabinet-making.

The theme of this years Grosvenor House Fair will be the art and influence of Japan, and Didier Aaron (London) have a magnificent 18thC French armoire by B.V.R.B. set with black and gold Japanese lacquer panels as the centre-piece at their stand, as well as two Louis XVI secretaires with Japanese namban lacquer set with mother of pearl, by Philippe-Claude Montigny of c.1780.

Illustrated: An unusual early 19thC English specimen marquetry heraldic games table. L.76cm D.54cm H.74cm.

Didier Aaron (London) Ltd, 21 Ryder Street, London SW1Y 6PX. Tel: (071) 839 4716 Fax: (071) 930 6699

Wartski Ltd was founded in 1865 and specialises in goldsmiths' work dating from the 16th to the 19th century. 18th century gold boxes and works of art by Carl Fabergé are always in stock together with the work of the Revivalist jewellers Castellani, Giuliano and Falize. A. Kenneth Snowman is Chairman of the firm and author of several books devoted to European precious metalwork. *Illustrated:* A hardstone study of a chimpanzee by Carl Fabergé, naturalistically carved of striated brown agate, with diamond eyes set in gold collets. St. Petersburg, C.1900. Height: 2 ⅘" (7cm).
Wartski Ltd, 14 Grafton Street, London W1X 4DE. Tel: (071) 493 1141 Fax: (071) 409 7448.

Stair & Company Ltd, founded in London in 1911 and established in New York in 1912, has been a valuable source of fine English antique furniture and works of art for many of the worlds most distinguished private and public collections. The London gallery contains a comprehensive range of carefully selected furniture and objects from the period 1680-1840, including mirrors, chandeliers, needlework and lamps. *Illustrated:* An elegant oval centre table with four square tapering legs of satinwood. The satinwood veneered frieze with four cedar lined drawers. Excellent colour and fine patina. English circa 1785. Size: 36" wide, 30" deep, 29" high.
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PEOPLE

Artificial-insect man ❧ Scathing playwright ❧ Caring decorator

Small-screen reformer ❧ Tiny ballerina thinking big

PHOTOGRAPH BY DEWEY NICKS, GROOMING, CHERYL MARKS

RON REAGAN: NOT AFRAID TO ASK AWKWARD QUESTIONS.

Talking Head

He has jumped out of airplanes for "Good Morning, America," written for *Playboy* and *Ladies' Home Journal,* and pirouetted across the stage for the Joffrey Ballet, but Ron Reagan is no lightweight. In fact (all jokes about heredity aside), he has the eye, the brain, and the *mouth* of a social commentator. "Do you notice a lot of questions that don't get asked anymore about the gulf?" he says. "Things like, Why did we give Iraq the go-ahead to invade Kuwait in the first place if we didn't really mean it? Remember when Saddam Hussein told our ambassador to Iraq what he was going to do and she said, 'That's an Arab matter'? I think some of those questions need to be raised once again."

Ronald Prescott Reagan (don't ever call him Junior) now has the perfect forum for hot potatoes like those: "Up Late with Ron Reagan," Fox Television's new, issue-oriented talk show, slated for this fall. With a video presentation setting up the topic for each show and guests to provide various viewpoints, Reagan, thirty-three, gets to be "referee, moderator, instigator . . . whatever it takes." He has had some practice. In the Reagan White House, he used to plague his father with devil's-advocate arguments on explosive issues ranging from conservation to abortion "because somebody had to." Ron Reagan's new role, in other words, is made to order—provided he does not get himself into trouble asking David Duke about face-lifts, the way he would like to.

Over the years Reagan's irreverent streak has netted him almost as many laughs as raised eyebrows—his Oval Office version of the famed "singing in the underwear" scene out of *Risky Business* tickled "Saturday Night Live" 's viewers no end. But the televised pitch he made for condoms when his father was ignoring the subject is a better barometer of his wry humor and intelligence. "If you don't think enough is being done [to stop the spread of AIDS]," he said, "write to your congressman—or to someone higher up." He is outraged at the failure of Americans to hold government accountable: "You find that the army has bulldozed four thousand people into mass graves in Panama, and '60 Minutes' has the *only* major media presentation of the issue!" And he is scathing on the subject of Americans' penchant for living vicariously: "People would rather see an event on television than see it in person. They would rather eat something that's artificial than something they know grew in the dirt—there are a lot of Cheez-Whiz and microwaves out there." Is he thinking of running for office? "*Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* is a nice movie," he says ruefully. "It's not reality. One person just gets swamped."

The only kind of reform Reagan is likely to engage in these days is small-scale, small-screen reform. "Remember George Carlin's bit about the seven words you can never say on TV?" he asks. "He didn't mention the other words: art, intelligence, education. In prime time, they run everything *real* smooth—don't want to disrupt that consumer impulse they're trying to generate. But for some strange reason, you sort of have permission to do things on late-night TV that you can't do in the hours that make the advertisers more nervous." Ron Reagan is looking forward to using that permission.

❧ *By Robin J. Schwartz, a New York–based free-lance writer who specializes in the arts.*

A Mind of Their Own

Given the number of cockroaches in the world already, it seems like a fair question to ask, Why would anyone want to make more?

"I'm *not* trying to make insects," retorts the roboticist Rodney Brooks, who has heard this question several times too often. "But I am trying to build robots that can get around in the real world and do useful work. And I've been inspired by the ability of insects to do a lot in the world without much neural circuitry."

Indeed, he has been inspired. This rumpled, hyperkinetic Australian is the founder and guru of the Insect Lab, an eclectic troupe of some two dozen artificial-in-

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telligence students and staff members at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology whose creations have been winning rave reviews in the robotics world for nearly half a decade now. And when Brooks says "robot," he does not mean some shiny, buzzing 'droid that rolls around like R2D2. He means a scruffy little electronic beastie that stalks across the floor with six legs churning and antennas lifted high, looking creepily like something alive.

His obsession with artificial insects struck in the mid-1980s, Brooks recalls, about the time he arrived at the AI lab with a Ph.D. from Stanford. He was eager to find something new and unusual to work on in the then calcified field of robotics. "The existing mobile robots would just sit there, computing for hours on end before they would make a move," he says. They would process data from their sensors; they would make internal maps of their environment; they would calculate elaborate plans using the most advanced techniques known to AI. They would do almost everything except act.

Forget it, decided Brooks. A centipede does not have to think about how to move all those legs, so neither would his robots. His robots, he decided, would not really think at all. Instead, he would give them electronic brains organized around coherent behaviors such as "avoid obstacles," "wander around," or "explore." Each behavior, in turn, would be programmed as a kind of reflex, a direct link between perception and action. If a wheeled robot were equipped with sonar, for example, and if the sonar readings suddenly showed that something was looming up on the right as it rolled along, th "avoid obstacles" behavior would kick in and tell the wheels to swerve to the left.

To see how this theory would work with real hardware, Brooks recruited the first of his many students and put them to work on Allen, which looked a bit like a two-foot-high footstool on wheel Completed in 1986, Allen would happily sit in the middle of a room until someone got close enough to alert its sonar sensors, whereupon its "avoid obstacles" behavior would cause it to scurry awa With a bit more program-

RODNEY BROOKS AND THE ARTIFICIAL INSECT GENGHIS ON PROVING GROUND IN ROBOTICS LAB.

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ming, Allen could also be induced to roll along a hallway and safely navigate through open doorways—without ever hitting a jamb.

Next came a more ambitious effort known as Herbert, which could roll into people's offices and use its gripper arm to steal empty soda cans from their desks. And so it went, with robots such as Seymour, Tom, and Jerry. But the tour de force was Genghis, the Insect Lab's first attempt at a robot with legs that could manage to navigate rugged, unpredictable terrain.

This was supposed to be very hard, explains Brooks. "Everyone was worried about stability," he says: making sure that the robot would not fall over and break something. "But it occurred to me, Why worry about that at all?" Falling down would certainly be a serious matter if your robot were the size of an elephant, but not if it were little. "Insects fall down all the time," Brooks says, "but they still manage to get around okay."

Genghis was built under Brooks's supervision in 1988 by an undergraduate named Colin Angle and programmed by Brooks himself. Completed in just twelve weeks, the foot-long, six-legged robot seemed in action eerily lifelike. As it moved forward, its "walk" behavior would cause its legs to move much as an insect's do. As it started to clamber over an obstacle such as a book, "force-balancing" behaviors started pulling various legs in and out to keep its body from tilting too far to one side. And if one leg should catch as Genghis tried to lift it over the edge of the book, a "leg-lifting" behavior would cause it to back down and try again—only this time lifting the leg a little higher.

Conventional roboticists, still thinking in terms of robots that would need to carry around a Cray supercomputer to do much of anything, have been profoundly impressed by all this. "Nobody thought you could do such seemingly intelligent things with such simple mechanisms," says Charles E. Thorpe, who works as head of Carnegie-Mellon University's NAVLAB.

But Brooks is also greeted with more than a little bit of skepticism: insectlike robots are all very well, say critics. But without high-level, AI-style brainpower, can the MIT robots ever be anything *more* than insects?

Such carping leaves Brooks unmoved. "I don't see such great success in the way everybody else is working that I should spend the rest of my life working that way, too," he says. Along with his followers at the Insect Lab, he is already striking out in a number of new directions. Inspired by the social behavior of ants, termites, and bees, for example, the group is building a colony of twenty identical robots that can be programmed to carry out tasks in a cooperative manner. (Robot construction crews? Robot farm workers? Robot armies?) They are also researching "gnat robots" that could be stamped out like microchips and released to do work by the millions.

And, not surprisingly, Brooks and his crew are hard at work on a successor to Genghis: Attila, which will have jointed legs and a much more sophisticated set of sensors and behaviors. Not only do they see Attila as a powerful research tool and a wonderful toy—Brooks has just formed a company to market Attila clones—but they think it could be the salvation of the faltering, muscle-bound U.S. space program. To take just one example, says Brooks, NASA's current planning for the unmanned exploration of Mars calls for flying one or two huge mobile robots weighing about a ton and costing about a billion dollars apiece. But why not instead pepper the surface of the Red Planet with about thirty little robots like Attila? These mini rovers would be simple, with each one carrying just one or two instruments. But they would weigh only a few pounds apiece and would be much, much cheaper. If one failed, you would still have twenty-nine left. And perhaps best of all, they could roam the rocky deserts of Mars without needing constant supervision from the ground.

Right in line, says Brooks, with the Insect Lab's motto: "Fast, Cheap, and Out of Control."

By M. Mitchell Waldrop, a contributing correspondent for Science *magazine.*

Small Wonder

Ballet lore is rich in tales of affinities between ballet masters and their Galateas that read almost like love stories. To the list must now be added the story of Helgi Tomasson, artistic director of San Francisco Ballet, and the diminutive, delicate, twenty-two-year-old Elizabeth Loscavio, the company's rising star, who stands a hair over five foot one. More perhaps than any other dancer in SFB, she is identified as "Helgi Tomasson's dancer."

ELIZABETH LOSCAVIO: REALLY LIKES BEING PARTNERED.

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Her history follows a fairly common pattern. One of four offspring of a navy family, ash-blond, green-eyed, long-lashed Elizabeth followed her older sister into suburban dance classes; by the time she was seven she had decided to make ballet her life. And at seventeen, she had a stroke of luck. Just as she was moving from studio to stage, the company's leadership was passing from the show-biz-oriented Michael Smuin to the purely classical Tomasson, a protégé of George Balanchine. Tomasson seemed to sense the newcomer's instinctive refinement, accuracy, and performing vitality—solo roles came to her right away. Unlike some tiny dancers, Loscavio is not invariably the sparkly coquette; she has moods of romantic depth and complexity, and Tomasson has encouraged their development with parts like Princess Aurora in *The Sleeping Beauty* (which she dances again this month), where her youth, freshness, and scrupulous technique have shown exceptional individuality and beauty. And unlike many dancers who have earned the title "ballerina," she does not behave onstage as if she existed solely to be adored. "I really like being partnered," she says, "sometimes more than being out there alone. I love to do a lyrical pas de deux and look into someone's eyes without having to run away."

A crucial factor in Loscavio's emergence, strange as it seems, is her height. One of ballet's greatest danseurs nobles, Tomasson was also one of its shortest. A few years ago, petite, precise, musical Loscavio might have been his dream partner; today she is his dream student, a female counterpart through whom he can extend all he knows about creating a powerful and profound stage image out of a small stature. "I think because I'm so small I try to be big," she explains. "I try to lift my head to make up for being so short, and then it gets tense and he sees that. And line—he tries to work out the line so that my body can look its best in certain positions because of how short I am. He's really good about seeing those details—being definitely sideways, or on a diagonal, so my legs look their longest."

Both onstage and off, Loscavio finds her own ways of doing things. Unlike many of her colleagues, who go out to a restaurant after each performance for a detailed post mortem, Loscavio, a vegetarian, heads home to cook dinner for herself and her fiancé, a stagehand. "Every step has too much significance if there is nothing but ballet in your life," she says. "But if you think, Oh, well, so this pirouette didn't work today, but I still have to do the grocery shopping, it puts it all in perspective."

By Anita Finkel, editor and publisher of the New Dance Review.

PHOTOGRAPH BY KRISTINE LARSEN

GEORGE C. WOLFE: THE NERVE TO PROVOKE AUDIENCES.

George C. Wolfe's Theater for Misbehavin'

For the playwright and director George C. Wolfe, madness is not necessarily some fatal affliction that devours its victims; it may also be edifying. Consider Topsy Washington, the party-hearty girl from Wolfe's play *The Colored Museum,* an excursion through black history. As she moves to the music—and through a series of images of African-Americans both triumphant and tortured—Topsy explains how she used to go into a rage whenever someone did not get her identity straight. Now that is the least of her worries. Instead of fleeing from all that is painful and strange in African-American history, Topsy extends her joyous, reckless embrace to "all my colored contradictions" and announces, "I'm dancin' to the music of the madness in me."

"I think there's an inherent schizophrenia in most black people," says George Wolfe, whose scorching wit is as subversive as it is graceful. "When they become creative black people—and especially when they become creative public-figure black people—then the schizophrenia is squared, becomes magnified."

Whatever schizophrenia Wolfe himself may be feeling these days may have as much to do with flourishing projects as with contradictions. In just one year, he seems to have become America's most prolific, if not its hottest, new playwright. First was the New York premiere of *Spunk,* Wolfe's rousing adaptation of short stories by the Harlem Renaissance's greatest storyteller, Zora Neale Hurston. *Spunk* tells three tales of personalities torn in two by such warring elements as self versus duty and the big city versus the home ground. Then the New York Shakespeare Festival's Joe Papp turned over the reins of one of the Public Theater's five theaters to Wolfe, to do with whatever he pleased for an entire season. The first fruits of this audacious move appeared last fall, when Wolfe adapted Bertolt Brecht's *The Caucasian Chalk Circle,* transporting this fable of class warfare to a Caribbean island shaken by revolt against a Duvalier-like dictator. At the Mark Taper Forum, in Los Angeles, this winter, Wolfe presented his first full-scale musical, *Jelly's Last Jam,* based on the life of Jelly Roll Morton, the man who claimed to have invented jazz. Wolfe embraces the exasperating Jelly (he was famous for being insufferable and overbearing) as well as the gifted one: Morton at his most galling and appalling represents, says Wolfe, "the asshole in all of us."

And right now *Blackout,* Wolfe's fiercest piece to date, is stunning audiences at the Public Theater (April 30–May 26). *Blackout* is a play about what happens when the little felicities that hold life together and permit urban life to be possible are abraded to the point where they burst into flames.

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Wolfe has been putting shows together since his kindergarten days, in Louisville, Kentucky: "Even then I would never act in plays; I would stage them—while everybody else was taking naps. I remember this girl named Paula Marshall. While she was sleeping I'd wrap a towel around her head so she'd have long hair, and she'd become Sleeping Beauty." While Wolfe was a student playwright at Pomona College, a recurrent theme began to emerge in plays like *Up for Grabs,* which represents a funny, exasperated search for black identity.

Wolfe is just beginning to emerge in the public's consciousness; his Obie Award–winning play *The Colored Museum* received a national audience this February when it premiered on PBS's "Great Performances." *The Colored Museum* is structured as a tour of twelve "exhibits" of African-American cultural phenomena, from what one character calls "preoccupation with the texture of your hair" to canonized cornerstones of black theater such as *A Raisin in the Sun.* But what appear at first to be hilarious send-ups of contemporary black culture end up portraying the anguish that underlies those jokes. One character, an Armani-suited buppie, murderously confronts his younger, more militant self and screams, "King Kong would have made it to the top if only he had taken the elevator! Instead he brought attention to his struggle and ended up dead."

When *The Colored Museum* opened, in 1986, the reviews were all raves except for one. In the *Village Voice,* the playwright and librettist Thulani Davis took exception to some of Wolfe's characterizations of women. Last year, Wolfe called Davis and asked her if she would like to adapt *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* for him. She accepted instantly. "I was floored. I don't know any artists who would call the one person who gave them a bad review and ask if she'd like to work with them. It says a lot about George as a human being. Most of us are too vengeful for that!"

By Margaret Spillane, who teaches writing at Yale and is a columnist for the Nation.

PHOTOGRAPH BY KEN SHUNG

ALEXANDRA STODDARD: A VERY DIFFERENT VIEWPOINT.

The Good Life

Alexandra Stoddard, the interior designer, whose clients include Marsha Mason and the New York Yacht Club, is known to a much wider audience

through her magazine columns and numerous books. Their titles suggest her celebratory approach to her profession and her life—*Living a Beautiful Life, Gift of a Letter, Living Beautifully Together.* They may sound inspirational, but the message is surprisingly down-to-earth, stimulating, and often humorous: use your silver every day, make routines into graceful rituals, and live each day as if you were having a party. We may have heard much of this before; she nevertheless captures the ear and stirs the imagination.

As a child she loved working in the garden, with its peonies, roses, poppies, and foxgloves. Seeing a Monet in a museum when she was five was a revelation—"the light, the color, the freshness." This spirit she later worked to bring into her own surroundings, where now palest-pink walls with white trim set off furniture upholstered in a yellow chintz with green and pink flowers (a twelve-year-old Angelo Donghia print called "Bloomsbury").

At boarding school, where she was a scholarship student, her art teacher took her out in the rain when her mother wanted the teacher to bring her in from the rain. "And she was telling me all the opposites—'Get upside down and look at the world in new ways.' " It was at her urging that Alexandra applied for and received a full scholarship to New York's School of Interior Design. She was following a family tradition, for both her mother and her godmother were interior designers.

When she was sixteen, an aunt proposed to take her around the world. "The school gave me permission so long as I wrote about what I experienced every day and did little watercolors, and afterwards I would come back and lecture. This would give me an education I could use in my designing. But in India I suddenly got the idea of staying there and working for an orphanage. I didn't, of course, but caring about people made me start out as an interior designer with a very different point of view from most of my colleagues'."

In 1963, Stoddard went to work for McMillen, Inc., where she became Eleanor Brown's protégée. When Mrs. Brown retired, in her early nineties, Stoddard opened her own firm, Alexandra Stoddard Incorporated. "I've collected mentors like most people collect bottles," she says. "I need these people in my life. And I embrace them. I rejoice in the fact that all my life I have looked to older people for wisdom."

As a decorator and designer she dislikes formality. "If I go into a client's house where there's tons of money and they make it very formal, it makes me feel fat and awkward. I feel like a bull in a china shop. If I react that way—and I've been around; I've seen the finest—I think other people will feel that way too." What she likes best is to bring vitality into dull spaces by means of color and comfortably arranged furniture, avoiding at all costs the sense of a "done" room.

She finds it easy to establish intimacy with her clients: "I help them realize that they don't buy a secretary for the north wall of their living room but they buy it because they want to sit and write beautiful letters. It's all based on use and the fact that you live, physically, in that place, that room. But don't worry about the place; worry about yourself *in* that place." Banks, offices, houses, even a Parisian *hôtel particulier* all show her unabashedly impressionistic touch—fresh, spontaneous, and unpretentious.

"With a sense of humor," she says, "a bit of whimsy, not taking things too seriously, I think things always work out. You can have a Régence chair but put Jack Lenor Larsen persimmon suede on it. No one knows it's a great chair, but it just looks and feels good."

By Alphé Williams, a member of the Connoisseur *staff.*

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INSIDE THE VATICAN GARDENS

BY GERTRUDE GRACE SILL

PHOTOGRAPHS BY EVELYN HOFER

St. Peter's Basilica is at the pulsing heart of Rome, its soaring dome dominating the skyline of the ancient city. Millions come to visit, embraced first by the welcoming arms of Bernini's baroque colonnade, then enfolded into the magnificent church itself. But behind this façade is a world few know and still fewer can enter. Here, set into a maze of buildings, are the offices and institutions of the Roman Catholic church. And behind *them* lies an astonishing place of peace and respite, the Vatican gardens.

Vatican City, with its permanent population of some 400 souls, occupies 104 acres of real estate, the equivalent of a small eighteen-hole golf course. Of that, the gardens account for perhaps 65 acres (a twelve-hole course). To a surprising extent, they represent terra incognita.

Among the world's most important gardens, the Vatican's are unique. They lack both the formal unity of those at Versailles and the romantically ordered vision of nature that distinguishes Stowe and the other great eighteenth-century gardens of England. There is no fabulous series of fountains, as at the Villa d'Este; no global botanical collection, as at Kew; no superb floral borders, as at Great Dixter, in Sussex. Instead, the Vatican gardens are complicated and intricate—as complex as the papacy itself. The plan they follow is not a true plan but the reflection of the Vatican's long history of pragmatism.

There are gardens within gardens; long vistas that run smack into ancient buildings; fountains that appear, like God's grace, in the unlikeliest places. Yet the feeling here is one not at all of disorder but of serenity. The din of Rome is hushed by the murmur of fountains, the song of birds, the wind sighing in the umbrella pines. The air seems fresher, purer. You have entered a sort of Eden.

The Vatican gardens, fan shaped, occupy an often steep hillside. In antiquity, this (and more land) was the site of Nero's summer villa and gardens, well placed to catch every cooling breeze. In early Christian times, the Mons Vaticanus, as the area behind old St. Peter's was known, was filled

A secret park as complex as the papacy, as old as Christianity

Above: One of many unexpected delights, a mosaic niche in an old building. Left: The great dome of St. Peter's can be seen from nearly every point in the gardens, including this papal vegetable patch.

The gardens are complicated and intricate; they reflect pragmatism.

with orchards, vineyards, and cloistered monastic gardens. Massive walls, incorporating forty-four lookout towers, were constructed as protection by Pope Leo IV after the attacks on Rome in 846. Portions of these walls remain, reinforced by battlements designed by Michelangelo.

Massive change came to the gardens in 1506. When rebuilding St. Peter's, the intellectual, imperious Pope Julius II did away with the old-fashioned gardens and commissioned the brilliant architect Donato Bramante to design enormous formal gardens within the green area. Specifically, the idea was to link the Belvedere villa, on the high ground in the northern portion of the Vatican, with the lower Vatican Palace, in the south. Combining architecture and landscape design in an enclosed unity, this plan was to revolutionize the way European gardens would be laid out.

Basically, Bramante created three great terraces on the hillside. The lowermost, in the shadow of St. Peter's, was a vast, grassy, open arena for tournaments and pageants. Rising above it, linked by steps, were two levels planted with formal geometric parterres. On the top level, the famous Vatican collection of classical sculpture was displayed, an innovation in garden design at the time. Bramante's majestic scheme was truncated in the eighteenth century, when the Vatican Museums and Library were built. These buildings enclosed the formal gardens—we can glimpse what Bramante had in mind in the Courtyard of the Pigna—and formed a wall between them and the rest of the Vatican gardens.

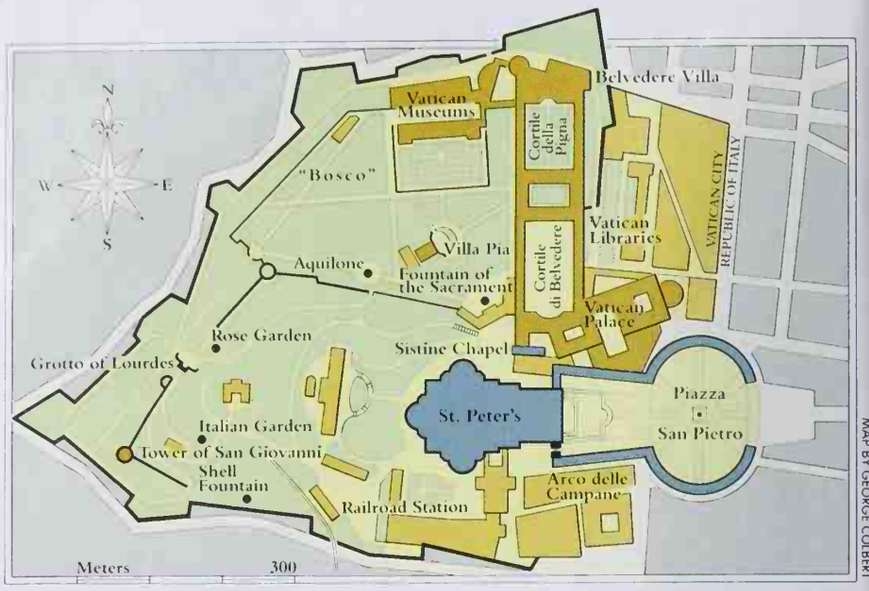
Above: The charming courtyard of the Casina (built 1558–62) of Pius IV.

Opposite: The Italian Garden, the last classic Renaissance "room" in the Vatican gardens.

Nowadays, there is only one way for most people to visit the gardens: by bus in the exclusive daily tour (see box). The group enters the Vatican through the Arco delle Campane (Arch of the

Bells) and is thrice carefully checked as to identity. The bus passes the seldom used Vatican railroad station, swings by the Vatican radio transmitter, and stops at the hill's highest point, in the western corner of the garden, at the Tower of San Giovanni. One of the original lookout towers, it was remodeled in 1975 and now serves as a Vatican apartment used for distinguished guests. From there, the group is guided on foot down the garden to a meeting spot with the bus.

Near the Vatican radio station, just a few minutes' walk away, is a nice, homey touch: raised vegetable beds, fertilized organically. This small garden supplies the papal table, direct. A spring selection of seasonal vegetables includes tiny new potatoes, zucchini, eggplant, purple garlic, peas, and fresh herbs. Tomatoes and beans are just beginning to sprout, and in the potato patch a lone apple sapling stands. It was a gift from some Polish girls who brought it from their home, kissed its leaves, and presented it to the current pope, John Paul II.



MAP BY GEORGE COLBERT

Right: Twenty gardeners mind the sixty-five-acre park. Below: The gardens were meant to be a place where the popes could get away from it all.

Below the Tower of San Giovanni is the Italian Garden, the sole remaining large parterre. A green, rectangular "room," it possesses the symmetry, perspective, fountains, paths, and verdant color that are all essential elements for a classic Renaissance garden. There are no flowers. Indeed, one has to wonder why in the Vatican gardens flowers are so scarce, confined mainly to the accents of geraniums and oleanders growing in huge terra-cotta pots incised with the Vatican crest.

"The reason," explains Elio Cortellessa, the chief gardener, "is that few flowers can withstand the summer heat of Rome, and nowadays we do not have the workers to tend them. We do grow flowers for the Vatican Palace and altars in two greenhouses, for pots and bedding plants. However, our twenty gardeners work primarily on maintenance of the grounds and care of the trees."

A few minutes to the northeast is the oddly named Rose Garden, where not roses but jasmine grows. The fluffy, fragrant vine has been trained to form eighteen large arches that together make a balanced, symmetrical composition. Set into grass plots edged with miniature box and bordered by pebbled paths, the ensemble is balanced by a matching pool at either end—an unexpected and enchanting spot.

In counterpoint to the formality of the Rose Garden is the *bosco,* or woods. A shady grove, cooled by fountains and running brooks, it is divided by meandering paths and offers seats in secluded nooks.

The last major separate component of the gardens is perhaps the best. At the foot of the *bosco,* shaded by pines, is the Villa Pia. Known also as the Casina of Pius IV, it is the first example of an Italian garden house, a type of retreat that would proliferate through Europe. The little villa, or *casina,* was begun in 1558 by Pope Paul IV; it faced an enclosed courtyard with a fountain and loggia. Two years later, Paul's successor, Pius IV, commissioned Pirro Ligorio to enlarge the simple plan. The result was an architectural gem consisting of two vaulted pavilions built around the courtyard.

In earlier times, star-shaped parterre beds radiated out from the villa, an inspiration for future French gardens. Fifty classical sculptures decorated the courtyard and grounds. One can well imagine papal guests seated on marble benches, chatting about spiritual and temporal affairs, enjoying concerts and banquets in the shade, soothed by the splash of the central fountain. No wonder the historian Jakob Burckhardt

It is easy to imagine the gold and red papal carriage rolling down the secluded allées to an outdoor meeting.

was moved to rapture a century ago. "The Villa Pia is the most perfect retreat imaginable for a midsummer afternoon," he wrote, without overstatement.

Of the other elements that abound in the Vatican gardens, probably the least successful is the sculpture, which is almost uniformly banal. On the other hand, most of the fifty-nine fountains are quite marvelous. A team of plumbers maintains them, keeping the water so clean, it seems to dance in the Roman light.

Water was not always plentiful. In the Middle Ages, drought prevailed. The Renaissance pope Paul V reactivated an ancient Roman aqueduct, Aqua Paola, to bring water to the Vatican. This water still feeds all the fountains. Propelled by gravity, descending from fountain to fountain, the water ends up in the twin fountains in St. Peter's Square before flowing into the Tiber.

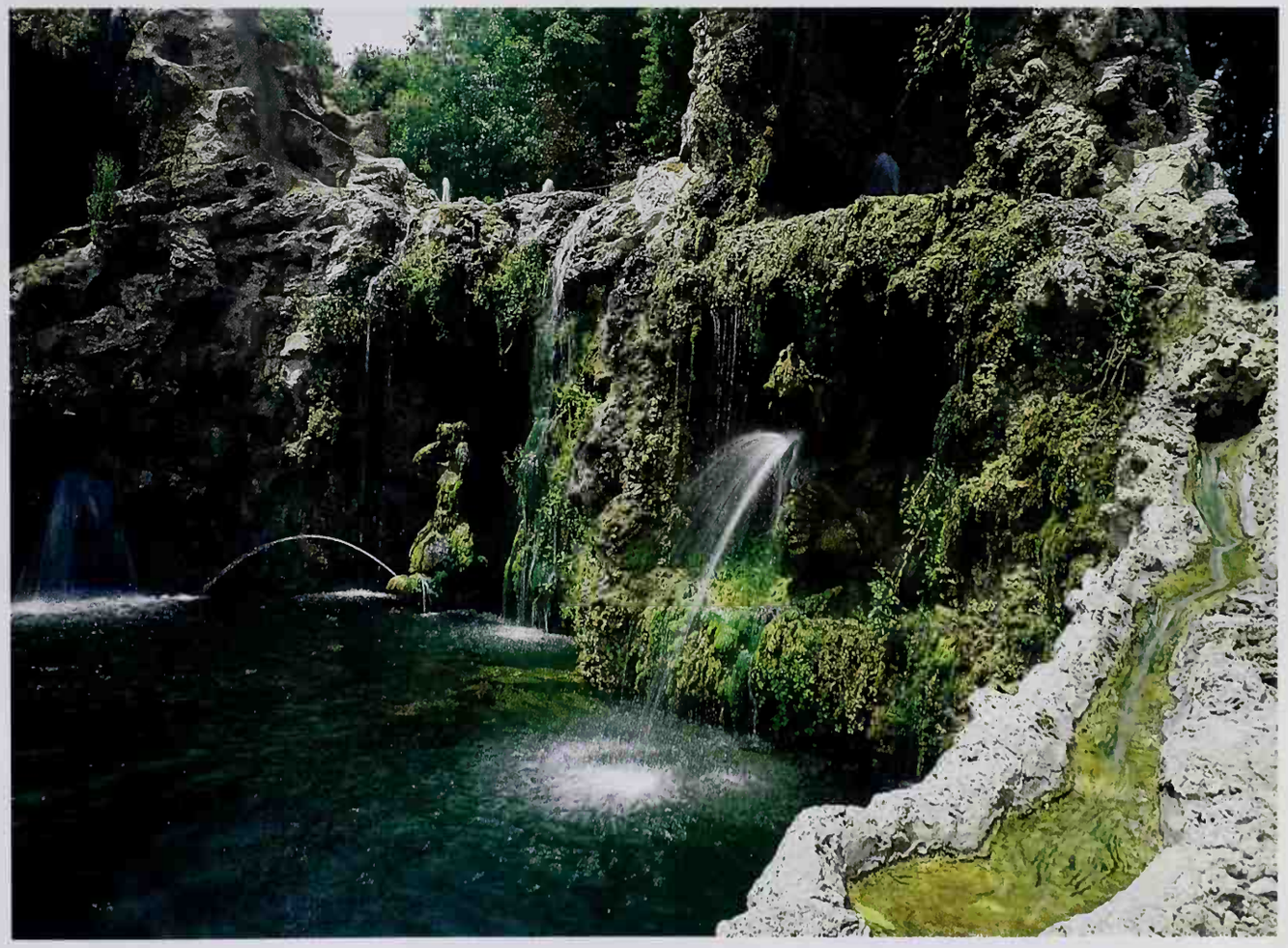
With abundant water available, Paul V installed the three most spectacular fountains in the gardens. The Aquilone is brutal, pagan, masculine. A sprawling grotto of grottoes built of gray, moss-covered tufa, it is crowned by a huge, imperial eagle (*aquilone*, in Italian), the emblem of Paul V, of the Borghese family. Jets and cascades of water splash into the large basin, where time-worn putti appear to be drowning. Mermaids lurk within two caves, while winged dragons—another Borghese emblem—vomit endless streams of water.

The delightful Galleon Fountain.

Farther down the hill, more architectural and militant, is the Fountain of the Sacrament. Set in a wall of the old Mint Building, two half-round crenellated towers balance a niche, which contains the three-tiered fountain. Six vertical jets symbolize burning candles; a wheel of water represents a monstrance holding the Blessed Sacrament. The symbolism may be obscure, but the papal identity is not: a pair of Borghese dragons dominate the towers.

The most spectacular of the Pauline fountains is the most hidden, tucked into a wall of the Vatican Palace. In a public square, it would be the hit of Rome. The lead Galleon Fountain, by Jan van Santen, is a finely crafted, fifteen-foot-long scale model of a three-masted Renaissance warship at sea in a former papal fishpond. Volleys of water shoot from cannons; jets of spray rise from the yards and fall like smoke. Plumes of water gush in all directions, from pennant to figurehead. Theologians suggest that the ship symbolizes the

(Continued on page 109)



Right: The Aquilone Fountain, one of fifty-nine in the gardens, all of them different.

The 23 Best Chairs

By Paula Deitz

Nothing except the clothes we wear is so closely aligned to the human figure as the chairs we sit in, and, like clothes, chairs reflect not only the human shape but period and place. Comfort and utility may be the raison d'être of a chair, but it is also an icon embodying the look of each age—its structure, environment, and social customs. From all the chairs designed and made since 1725—when the chair, according to the Yale architecture historian Vincent Scully, became "an active creature, an organic body"—a group of experts has chosen its favorites, twenty-three of them. They are described below in more or less chronological order.

1. Vincent Scully is fascinated by that moment in history when the chair changed from being a rigid architectural frame to being a structure that reflects human anatomy. "The arm itself, as it turns over and down," he says, "makes us feel the sitter." This transformation is epitomized for him by a Philadelphia Queen Anne armchair in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. He admiringly points out the controlled curve of the back, ending in a hip joint that transmits energy to the seat and to the cabriole legs, crouched in a perpetual knee bend above the slipper feet.

2. Ulysses Dietz, the decorative-arts curator at the Newark Museum, notes not only the chair's design but its status and symbolic power in the home. Once upon a time, chairs were moved from room to room as needed, but in the eighteenth century they multiplied, and many families probably owned at least one Windsor chair, a sculptural tour de force of the turner's craft. First made in England, it became popular in America after 1740, a vernacular form unrelated to fashionable styles. Spindles doweled into a rounded plank seat formed the slanted back, and the legs were turned on a lathe. "The Windsor chair is a perfect example of how even the most functional chairs were embellished by elements of design," says Dietz, praising its "unnecessary beauty."

CHAIR, COURTESY FREDERICK P. VICTORIA & SON, INC., NEW YORK

Opposite: Jacob armchairs, reflecting archaeological finds (ca. 1810). Above: Louis XV hairdressing chair (ca. 1760): total fluidity, sweeping curves.

3. Dietz himself prefers another eighteenth-century chair, one of the Chippendale-style side chairs attributed to Benjamin Randolph of Philadelphia from the set of at least twelve designed for John Cadwalader about 1770. "It may not be the most beautiful," he says, "but it's the grandest and most sophisticated side chair of its time, an embodiment of the rococo world." American cabinetmakers hired carvers to interpret the elaborate designs in Chippendale's *The Gentleman & Cabinet Maker's Director,* of 1754. In this example, the flowing-ribbon back splat, with C-scrolls and double figure eights, shoots up like a fountain of leafy vines to an undulating crest rail. Supporting the broad saddle seat are a scalloped skirt, exuberantly carved knees, and hairy-paw front feet. Vincent Scully calls this combination of animal vitality and sprouting decoration "a force of nature."

4. Anthony Victoria, of Frederick P.

HOUSE & GARDEN

Thomas Hope's neoclassical chair: "serviceable and functional as anything today."

Philadelphia Chippendale-style chair (ca. 1770): grandeur.

Philadelphia Queen Anne chair (1725): suave, organic.

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, NEW YORK (2)

Photographs by Len Jenshel

Victoria & Son, in New York, collects chairs ordered by "the general consuming public" of the eighteenth century, the first era to make a habit of "style, function, and comfort." A chair, he says, "requires more consummate skill and vision to make than a cabinet, for the *menuisier* must visualize from drawings how to mold parts and display grace with just a few thin members and little surface space." More than that, the chair had to fit the body. He points to a late Louis XV hairdressing chair of carved beech wood as demonstrating the fullest development in the rococo period of "total fluidity and strongly sweeping curves." The curious dip in the chair back, for the occupant's neck, enhances its contours—though it may bring to mind the fate that awaited the fine ladies who owned such chairs.

5. Guy Kuraszewski, a curator at Versailles, is not wedded to court furniture: "True elegance and simplicity of line are also found in very ordinary furniture of the period." But palace chairs have their place. He indicates a straight-backed *chaise à carreau* designed by Jean-Baptiste Boulard for Louis XVI's Salon des Jeux, at Versailles. In a return to straight classical lines, this armless side chair, on fluted, spindle-shaped legs, topped by oval-framed rosettes, is like an elegant gilded frame for the rich tapestry covering the back and seat. In a set of thirty-six, these chairs did more than furnish a courtly room; they provided the luxury that became a necessity at court.

6. In the gallery of Malmaison Antiques, in New York—a virtual storehouse of imperial furniture—chairs made by the celebrated Georges Jacob and his sons show that liberty, equality, and fraternity did not apply in the world of chairs. Inspired by recent discoveries of ancient civilizations, the gilded seats made to the emperor Napoleon's order for the Grand Trianon resemble Egyptian thrones. The gallery also has a similarly inspired pair of armchairs with winged sphinxes supporting the arms and majestic claw feet.

7. James Stirling, the British architect, collects the solid-mahogany chairs designed by Thomas Hope, author of *Household Furniture and Decoration* (1807). Hope was faithful to the antique style, with archaeologically correct Egyptian and Greek motifs. Stirling considers his chairs "as serviceable and functional as anything designed today." They are frontal designs, best seen against the wall. The one he likes best has sturdy saber legs and a Greek-lyre panel in the back.

8. In the middle of the nineteenth century, a neo-rococo style and advanced technology took over furniture. In a process patented by the furniture maker John Belter, Ulysses Dietz writes, "laminated rosewood (really plywood) could be steam pressed into curved forms, and layered up to allow for ornate neo-rococo carving." Belter may have perfected the technique, but Dietz thinks that the chairs of Joseph Meeks & Sons excelled his in grace and beauty. The Newark Museum's upholstered armchair by Meeks, from a parlor suite made around 1850, demonstrates the sense of motion achieved with a profusion of carved grapevines and roses around the high, upholstered back.

CHAIR, COURTESY THE COOPER-HEWITT MUSEUM, NEW YORK

Art nouveau chair (1908), by Hector Guimard: a sinewy classic.

9. Christopher Wilk, of the Victoria and Albert Museum, selects "Chair No. 14," the 1859 design by Michael Thonet. Working in Vienna, Thonet took the steam process a step further to devise bentwood furniture made from strips of beech wood shaped during an assembly-line process that required no cabinetmaker. With its inverted double-U back, the ubiquitous café chair consists of six parts, ten screws, and a caned seat. Its sheer novelty and practicality made it popular everywhere.

10. David McFadden, the curator of decorative arts at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum, considers the Shaker rocker "the hallmark of the American approach, the pragmatic and dig-

To make a chair requires consummate skill and vision.

FRANCES McLAUGHLIN GILL

Frank Lloyd Wright side chair (1902). Not for lounging.

Shaker rocker from Mount Lebanon, New York (1878–1910).

CHAIR, COURTESY THE COOPER-HEWITT MUSEUM, NEW YORK

Gerrit Rietveld's Red/Blue chair (1918). Comfort?

SETH JOEL

Mackintosh's oak chair for a Glasgow tearoom (1897).

Rolf Fehlbaum, founder of the Vitra Design Museum, among some of his favorite twentieth-century chairs.

nified rural idiom." Though the Shakers made only what was useful and banned applied ornament, there was no objection to beauty. The museum's rocker was made at Mt. Lebanon, New York, between 1878 and 1910.

11. For Barry Friedman, a New York gallery owner, the modernist movement began in 1897 with a stained-oak chair designed in Glasgow by the architect Charles Rennie Mackintosh for Miss Cranston's Argyle Street Tea Rooms. His stark designs were more popular in Austria than in Scotland, for the Secessionist movement in Vienna was turning against revivalist styles in favor of forms reduced to their essentials.

12. Although pure function was also the idea of architects like Josef Hoffmann, the result was what Kirk Varnedoe, of New York's Museum of Modern Art, calls "richness from reduction." The chair Hoffmann designed in 1904 for the Purkersdorf Sanatorium, with its back splat pierced by circles, exemplifies these developments. The wooden balls that appear to strengthen the leg joints became a major decorative motif in later Hoffmann chairs.

CHAIR, COURTESY BARRY FRIEDMAN, LTD., NEW YORK

Josef Hoffmann's sanatorium chair (1904).

13. David McFadden chooses another, very different aesthetic, flourishing in France at the same period. It is seen in the sinewy, elongated shapes of the art nouveau chairs designed by Hector Guimard. He selects a 1908 classic in cherry wood on slender legs with finely carved, semiabstract scrolls and foliation. "The strength of this design is in its emphasis on stems, where the growth is, rather than on flowers and leaves."

14. In America, Frank Lloyd Wright, though he subscribed to the Arts and Crafts movement's concepts, welcomed the precision that the machine gave his designs, such as the high-backed dining chair with eleven vertical slats extending from crest rail to stretcher. Though they create an architectural enclosure when drawn up to the table, Wright's drawings show them placed against the wall, making the vertical designs an element of the organic whole.

15. Another architect-designed chair is that of Gerrit Rietveld. This chair, designed in 1918, became an expression of the De Stijl movement, reducing design to the fundamental and harmonious elements of horizontal and vertical lines complemented by primary colors. The "Red/Blue" chair, of 1918, orderly yet abstract, is a simple framework of laths painted black, the square, sawed-off ends yellow. Two boards, red and blue, form back and seat. Later, Mondrian used these forms in his painting.

16. Christopher Wilk nominates Marcel Breuer's sleek and comfortable "Wassily" chair as one of the great classics of the twentieth century. One day in 1925 as he rode his bicycle to the Bauhaus, the architect saw the makings of a chair in his handlebars. Hiring a plumber to do the welding, he produced a club armchair consisting of a leather sling suspended within a network of tubular steel. It took its name from Wassily Kandinsky, who had generously praised it.

17. Rolf Fehlbaum is the founder of the new Vitra Design Museum, in Weil am Rhein, near Basel, and head of Vitra International, a company that makes, among other things, chairs. In a building designed by the California architect Frank O. Gehry are 1,200 chairs dated from 1850 to the present. Hanging from overhead pipes, displayed on pedestals, or stacked in cubbyholes, the chair is celebrated as sculpture. Of

(Continued on page 110)

No other object follows the human body so closely.

SETH JOEL

Mies van der Rohe's Barcelona chair (1929): "the greatest chair of the century."

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, NEW YORK

The Eames chair (1946): its beauty lies in its bare essentials.

COURTESY BARRY FRIEDMAN, LTD., NEW YORK

Marcel Breuer's Wassily chair (1925): inspired by his bicycle.

Rafting down the Usumacinta

When my friend Sam Edgerton, an art-history professor at Williams College, told me he was going to lead a rafting expedition down the Usumacinta River, the meandering border between Mexico and Guatemala, to see the Maya ruins, I knew that a rare opportunity had come my way. Too often, travel to archaeological sites is a dream of adventure debased by the realities of late-twentieth-century mass tourism: the buses, the fumes, the hordes of the unprepared. Sam's trip would be different. We would venture off the beaten track. We would approach the monuments with the proper awe. Our reward would be a sense of true discovery.

Still, I felt cautious. Sam is an expert on many subjects, among them Maya art and archaeology. Of rafting and camping, however, he is as innocent as I am. But he quickly reassured me that those trifling details would be handled by some professional wilderness guides.

The trip was peculiarly attractive in that it would take us to some Maya sites that could not be reached by tour coach or rented car, or indeed by any land vehicle—places where lunch was not served and the only souvenirs were likely to be sunburn and chigger bites. That suited Sam and me just fine. While the tour was to begin with two days at Palenque, one of the major coach, lunch, and souvenir meccas in the New World, we would then head out into the jungle for the *real* stuff: a ten-mile hike to Bonampak, famous for its superb frescoes, and then the raft trip down the Usumacinta to Yaxchilán and Piedras Negras, two of the most important cities from the classic period of the Maya.

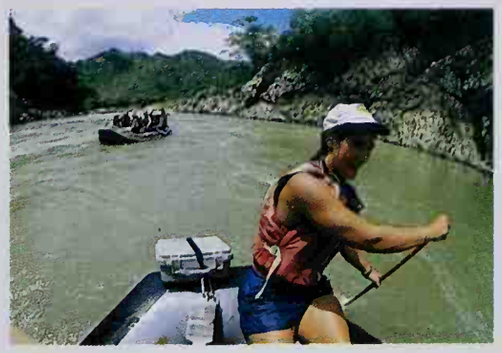
There were fourteen of us, selected from the hundreds of respondents to fliers Sam had sent to Williams alumni. "A lot of people eliminated themselves, by asking silly questions," Sam told me. The chosen few, ranging in age from twenty-two to sixty-eight, came from all over the country. We had all traveled widely, yet none had ever signed up for a tour before. The gender split was almost even (eight men, six women). The group comprised an investment banker, a paleoanthropologist, a land developer, a dress-shop proprietor, housewives, graduate students, a doctor, and a lawyer. "If an Indian chief had

By Jamie James

An archaeological adventure in Maya land

applied," Sam said, "I would have picked him, as well."

Palenque, set in the midst of high hills covered with lush rain forest and undoubtedly one of the most superb sites excavated anywhere, perfectly typified what we all hated about archaeological tourism. On the afternoon we arrived, the place looked like Coney Island on a Fourth of July weekend, crawling with sweaty gringos. The only sign of real life was some young Mexican couples necking in the shadows of the ruins. We made plans at once to return at sunup, before the coaches descended. An offering of a *propina* to the guards, and all was set.



Far from the madding crowd: Palenque at dawn, before the hordes descend; then, we make our escape down the river into the jungle.

As the first, liquid rays of sunlight struck the top of the reconstructed Palace Tower and the great pyramid called the Temple of Inscriptions, in a silence broken only by the occasional birdcall of the graceful, golden-tailed *oropéndola,* we could for a moment visualize Palenque as it once had been, at the height of its glory.

The high classic period of the Maya extended from A.D. 600 to 800, throughout the southern rain forest of Mexico and Guatemala. Unlike the Aztecs in central Mexico or the Incas in Peru, the Maya did not control a unified empire but lived in constantly squabbling city-states more along the lines of those in Renaissance Italy. Palenque attained its political and artistic zenith in the late seventh and early eighth centuries, during the reigns of a king called Lord Pacal (Shield), whose imposing profile is pictured everywhere in his capital, and his son, Chan Bahlum (Serpent Jaguar). The Temple of Inscriptions, which dominates the great courtyard of Palenque, is Pacal's tomb. His sarcophagus lies at the foot of a narrow, seventy-five-foot descent and is covered by an enormous sculptured stone slab, which depicts Lord Pacal in death within a schematic vision of the Maya cosmos.

Photographs by Kenneth Garrett

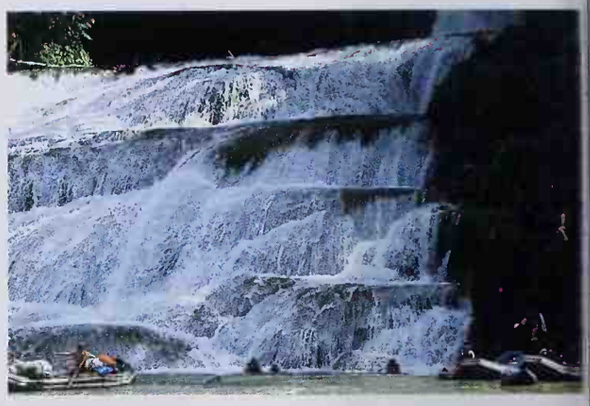
We approached Yaxchilán by river, as a M

Early the next morning we left for Bonampak. This, we decided afterward, was our finest hour, or rather three and a half hours: the hike to the site was pure hell. It rained every step of the way, and the trail, which was composed of a particularly clinging kind of clay, was wet and gloppy to the depth of about a foot. Every ten or fifteen minutes, we would hear a slippery sound, another loud plop, and a curse.

Bonampak was never a major political power, and its architecture, while noble and well preserved, is not especially striking. Yet it possesses mural paintings that are among the chief glories of the Maya heritage. Before the discovery of Bonampak in 1946, the only examples of Maya painting known to scholars were tiny fragments of fresco in the odd corner and niche of excavated sites such as Palenque. A British adventurer and photographer named Giles Healey was led to the ruins of Bonampak by Indian guides. Here, behind the nondescript exterior of a small building, Healey found three vaulted rooms completely covered with brilliantly colored frescoes. It was a sensational find, firmly in the Howard Carter tradition, and helped to launch the modern boom in Maya studies.

The copies of the Bonampak frescoes all of us had seen at the National Museum of Anthropology, in Mexico City, left us unprepared for the quality of the originals. Purely as figurative painting, they are astonishing. Sam, whose principal field of study is the Italian Renaissance, delivered a lecture on the mystical scenes with the help of his pocket flashlight. The hike back was a bit less dismal—at least we had accomplished our mission—but it continued to rain steadily. We got tired of being good sports.

We were greeted at camp by the delightful vision of a hot dinner being cooked for us by our river guides, two tanned, healthy young men and two tanned, healthy young women from the Nantahala Outdoor Center, in Bryson City, North Carolina. It gave us our first taste of the expedition's cuisine: spicy, delicious chicken Marengo, white rice, and salad, washed down with Mexican beer, and peach cobbler. We were to have a baked dessert with every evening meal on the trip. The food was not "gourmet"; it was simply very good. Lunches tended to be salads and tinned meats and fish, while dinners were hearty spreads, everything freshly made and with plenty of seconds. But even the most resourceful wilderness guides cannot keep fresh meat beyond about four days; after that, our menus were more vegetarian, relying on pasta and cheese.



No, we did not raft down these falls, or others like them. But we did stop here for a refreshing dip.

The next morning broke soft, clear, and warm for our embarkation. On a sandbar at the river's edge, our guides instructed us in the essentials of river-rafting, which, as we practiced it, not only was

grim might have done 1,200 years ago.

Even at Yaxchilán, where there are no crowds to contend with, it is worth getting up at first light.

as easy as falling off a log but also involved some of the same skills. The current did most of the work. The rapids, of course, were a different matter. While not as hair-raising as the legendary white-water rapids of North American rivers like the Snake, in Idaho, they provided some thrills even for our experienced rafters.

The Usumacinta is a glorious river—wide and deep and strong, with the dense green wall of the rain forest rising straight up as high as two hundred feet from sandy riverside beaches. The unearthly screech of howler monkeys boomed from bank to bank; macaws, *oropéndola* birds, and herons wheeled in the sky, which remained blue for most of the rest of the trip. As shadows lengthened across the river and dusk deepened the sky to violet, we arrived at the Maya city of Yaxchilán, accessible only by air or by water.

A bumpy landing strip ran near our tenting ground, and during the three days we spent here, two or three light planes a day brought in a handful of tourists well-heeled enough to pay the extortionate rates. By the end of the trip we had developed an elitist attitude toward

"Well, I don't know about you guys," Sa

the airborne tourists, rather as sailors look down their noses at the riders in noisy cigarette boats. To come to the great city of Yaxchilán by river is to approach it as it ought to be approached, as a Maya pilgrim might have done 1,200 years ago. The water level was quite low, and the riverbank vegetation grew luxuriantly tall, but even so an eagle-eyed rafter could see the ramparts of Yaxchilán peeking up above the boughs of the trees.

The site is huge, covering about a square mile of jungle. In its heyday in the seventh century, Yaxchilán was one of the most important cities in the Americas. Many of the most important sculptures have been removed and now constitute the core of the great Maya collection at Mexico's National Museum of Anthropology, but many exquisite pieces remain, including carved lintels that could have been removed only if the buildings of which they form a part had been brought down. Yaxchilán is in an excellent state of preservation, and Sam knew the site by heart, even though he had never seen it before.

Top, Yaxchilán: Sam Edgerton explicates a hieroglyphic lintel and takes the measure of a stela. Below: A rain god (or chac*) at Piedras Negras stares with cool composure into the dense green jungle.*

We were not supposed to venture onto the grounds except in the company of the official caretaker assigned to us, a merry young man named Marcos with two silver incisors. Though of Maya extraction, he knows nothing about Yaxchilán or the people who built it, and whereas the government guard at Bonampak was quite stern, forbidding even flashless photography, Marcos did not care what we did. He would take us to the site,

nid, "but I found what I came looking for."

curl up in a stone window, pull his cap over his eyes, and nap until it was time to leave.

Radiating out from a central riverside plaza, which is flanked on three sides by state buildings, Yaxchilán was ruled in the midseventh century by a great king named Bird Jaguar IV, Sam told us, his enthusiasm rising to rhapsody as he went along, and it was Bird Jaguar who built most of the imposing architecture now to be seen. At the western end of the plaza is a mysterious structure that archaeologists have rather prosaically dubbed Structure 19.

Back to civilization: one of the parks in the city of Villahermosa is devoted to the pre-Maya culture of the Olmec.

Mostly underground, it is filled with a maze of catacombs and little blind cells into which there enters not a ray of light. No one knows its purpose. We were perilously near to getting lost there, when Sam's flashlight picked out an eight-inch-long cockroach scuttling across the dank wall. "Oooh, neat!" cried our paleoanthropologist, reaching for his camera. The women screamed, and at that instant two bats came swooping just over our heads. We tumbled out of Structure 19 as fast as our seriously compromised dignity permitted and proceeded to Structure 33, a beautiful building high atop a steep hill at the eastern end of the plaza, its roof crested with a tall comb typical of Maya architecture. The steps in front of Structure 33 are richly covered with hieroglyphs. Like the great majority of the public inscriptions in the world, whether from the classical Mediterranean or ancient Asia—or, for that matter, from the cornerstones of modern skyscrapers—most of the hieroglyphs of Yaxchilán are pompous panegyrics, celebrating the people who got them built.

The ones on the steps of Structure 33 describe the victory of Bird Jaguar over his chief rival, a man named Jewel Skull, who, it seems, had had his neck and limbs broken and was trussed up into a big ball and hurled down this very hill. Maya civilization, we could see, was quite sanguinary. Several of the buildings on the main plaza of Yaxchilán, Sam explained, were erected to commemorate the autosacrifices, rituals in which noblemen lacerated their penises and queens pierced their tongues to give sustenance to their gods. The sacrificers drenched bark paper with their blood and burned it so that the gods could consume the smoke as divine food. Sam occasionally got carried away in his gruesome translations of the hieroglyphs pertaining to these rites; the author of a book about images of torture in Renaissance painting, he still has a relish for things revolting.

A peaceful two-day drift down the Usumacinta brought us to Piedras Negras. The newspapers in Mexico City had warned us of civil unrest in this district approaching a state

(Continued on page 110)

The traditions behind today's wedding fashions

Considering how long people have been getting married, much of what we regard as traditional about weddings is actually rather new. How the bridal party looks harks back to the Victorian era; how a wedding is celebrated is slightly newer, an accumulation of traditions that began to take its present form around the turn of the century. Compared with other forms of entertainment, a nineteenth-century wedding was among the simplest of social events. The typical bride's dress was far less ornate than a ball or an opera toilette, and the most formal of wedding celebrations, the breakfast, while no less ceremonious than a dinner party, was much simpler.

The dearth of pageantry in life today may be behind the fact that an elaborate wedding has become the only socially condoned form of excess. As life has become more casual, weddings have taken on an almost mythical character. They are, relatively, the most opulent events most people ever attend; and although it is usually assumed that to modernize is to simplify, the twentieth century, rather than paring away, has added to bridal traditions. The fantasy of being a beautiful bride and having the perfect wedding is particularly potent because it represents an attainable goal, far more likely, in fact, than the possibility of having a happy marriage.

From the nineteenth century we take the imperative look of the white wedding dress, the veil, the use of lace, the diamond solitaire engagement ring, and the queue of bridesmaids and flower girls. Weddings were usually performed in the morning (the most formal) or afternoon, followed by either a breakfast featuring bouillon, birds, salad, jellies, ices, and bonbons (a menu that did not fall out of favor until the 1940s) or a punch-and-cake reception. Customs included baking a ring into the cake for some bridesmaid to find and throwing old slippers, paper rose petals, and rice at the bride and groom

Made for Memories

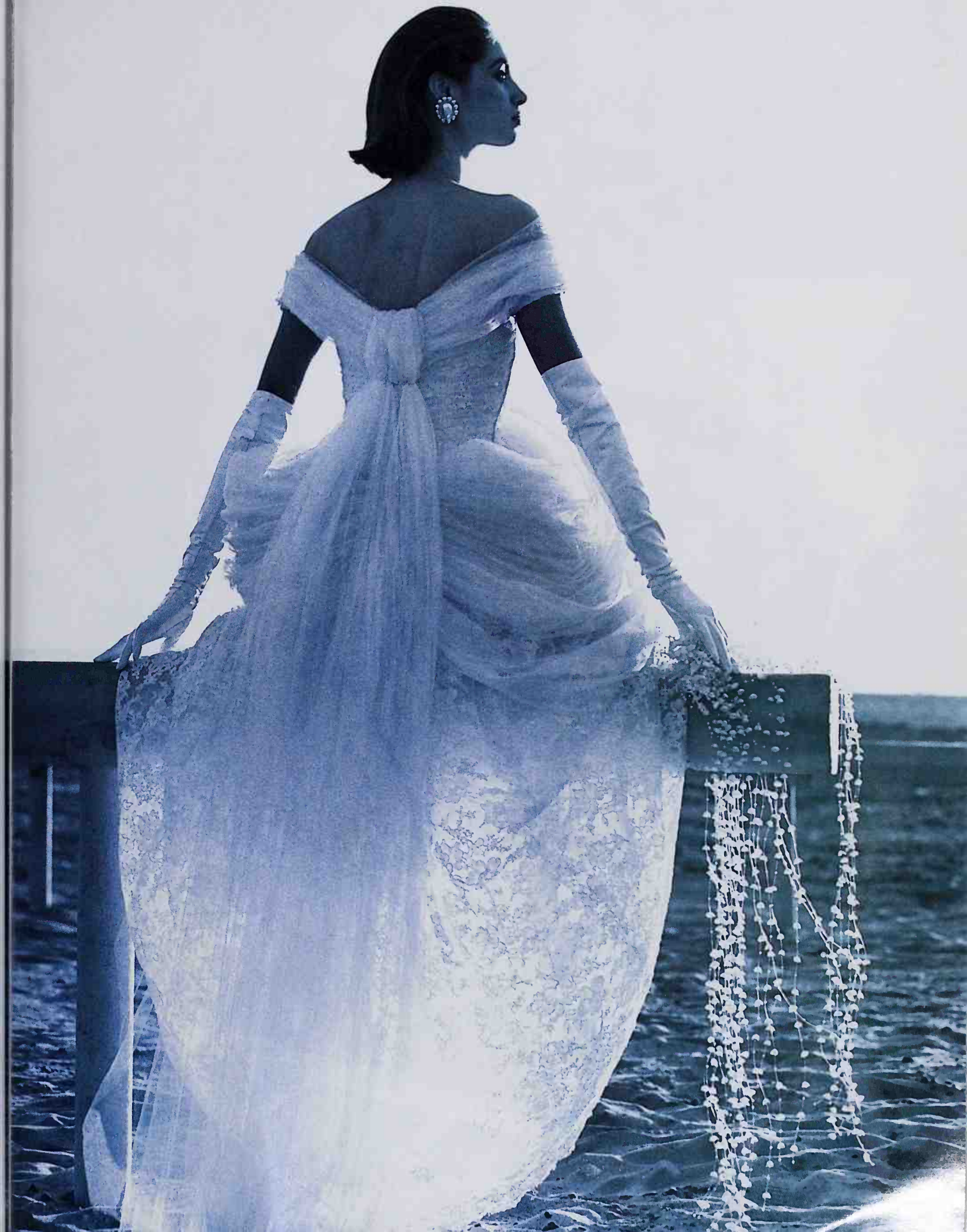
BY CAROLINE RENNOLDS MILBANK

Such quantities of sand! And ruffles too! Norma Kamali's palazzo pants (left) with camisole.

Makes walking up the aisle look easy (right). She wears Victor Edelstein's lace and tulle dress, shoes and lily-of-the-valley headpiece well in hand.

About to take the plunge (opposite) in that Edelstein gown, which looks even better from the rear. Earrings by Chanel.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY PHILIP NEWTON



CALIFORNIA
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Not much room for the groom in this buggy (left). Her sequined lace and illusion dress with train is by Carolina Herrera.

as they left in a carriage decorated with white flowers. Wedding favors, given to each guest, were small sprigs of white flowers tied with ribbon, with miniature slices of the bride's cake contained in white paper boxes with the couple's monogram in silver or gold.

By 1910, throwing slippers at the departing couple had degenerated into tying old shoes to their automobile, and by the 1920s, throwing the bride's bouquet was a practice so new that etiquette books were still trying to mollify brides who wanted to keep their bouquets and press the flowers. Bouquet throwing, though a modern custom, claimed an ancient precedent: the very old, possibly medieval custom of throwing the bride's garter—one very recently added to permissible wedding activities.

Entering the church to Wagner and leaving it to Mendelssohn had become so common by the end of the nineteenth century as to be the done thing, and around that time brides adopted the rhyme "Something old, something new . . ." as a guide. A little later, showers were being given for brides, a tradition said to date way back but in fact new as of 1910. Popular shower items included aprons, books, or, by the 1920s, aluminum. The voices of etiquette spoke disparagingly of the practice of derisory showers for the groom with gag gifts, including loud socks and oversize bow ties. Announcing an engagement in the newspapers in lieu of sending out cards had come to be accepted behavior, and by the second decade of the century it was no longer considered imperative to ask the bride's father's permission to propose to her.

Brides wear white because it connotes purity but also, even more important, because white has traditionally been *the* color for participants in the most august of ceremonies: christenings, confirmations, graduations, debuts, court presentations, and coronations. In many cultures, tradition demands other colors for weddings. Chinese brides wear red, and ancient Greeks wore yellow, the color associated with Hymen, the god of marriage. In Europe, brides dressed in white intermittently until the eighteenth century, when those who could afford it sometimes chose dresses of white and silver brocade, trimmed with silver lace.

Pure white began to be de rigueur for weddings at a time when it was being worn for everything else as well—the beginning of the nineteenth century. After color returned in the 1820s, white remained the choice for weddings, and as the nineteenth century progressed, more and more brides chose white in preference to a color that would be useful for wear after the ceremony. Although Queen Victoria, who was married in 1840, is associated with the idea of a white wedding, the custom was already firmly in place. She may, however, have been influential in associating brides with rare lace. Her own dress was decorated with panels of Honiton, which she removed to wear at the weddings of two of her children.

Since the invention of photography, pictures of brides, royal and otherwise, have created an accepted public image where individual choices formerly reigned. Along with voluble newspaper descriptions of dresses and receptions, and

LOCATION, COURTESY JOHNNY ROCKETS, LOS ANGELES, CALIF

She'll be late for her wedding! Lace jumpsuit (above), Comme des Garçons; sash, Debra Moises.

She can't believe it's true! Her 18.55-carat diamond ring (above) comes from Frances Klein Antique and Estate Jewelry.

It can't be washable, surely! Vera Wang's white satin and black velvet dress and veil (right). Pearls by Lagerfeld.

LOCATION, COURTESY PLAYLAND ARCADE, SANTA MONICA PIER, CALIF.

Does she think it will be all fun and games? Claude Montana's silk-sateen coat and train (left) with miniskirt to match.

Dancing barefoot on her wedding day in that Hanae Mori dress (opposite).

And so to bed, but take care not to muss Hanae Mori's short chiffon dress (left) with pearl straps!

inventories of wedding presents, photographs established certain definite formats: brides wore white satin more than any other fabric; their lace was point, preferably old; the flowers they wore were orange blossoms; and they carried lilies of the valley, roses, and white lilacs.

The most important aspect of the bridal garb was its reflection of the bride's past—hence its virginal hue—and not the future to be expected in her new household. Since it was the height of bad taste in the last century and early in this one for an unmarried young woman to appear publicly in opulent dress—sparkling stones, furs, and rich fabrics might be seen as lures—etiquette demanded that brides look simple and demure. Jewelry, in this country, was frowned upon unless the groom had presented the bride with something particularly sentimental and fine, and pearls, today almost mandatory, were shunned as a representation of her tears.

Usually her only ornament, besides her engagement ring and her veil, was flowers worn as a corsage on her bodice, garlanding her skirt, anchoring her veil, and in her bouquet. The current tradition that the groom pays for the bridal bouquet has its origins in the nineteenth-century custom of his sending the bride a bouquet not only on her wedding day but every time afterward when the couple went to a dance or reception. Bouquets were the precursors of corsages, and the most popular belles of the nineteenth century wore their admirers' nosegays suspended on ribbons down their arms. For their headdresses and to ornament their dresses, brides wore orange blossoms, usually of wax, imported from Europe or made at home from old candles. Their significance, which vexed many a Victorian expert on etiquette, was that orange trees are among the most fruitful of plants.

Wedding dresses, whether white, cream, or ecru, followed the fashionable silhouette—though Princess Alexandra's, when she wed the prince of Wales, in 1863, was a notable exception. She had her dress made without a crinoline but with a gathered train in back that was the first fashionable appearance of the bustle style. Because most weddings took place during the day, dresses were never décolleté (except during the 1830s and 1840s, when even day dresses were often worn off the shoulder). During the second half of the century, dresses were sometimes made in two pieces so that a bride could order a wedding dress made with a separate, barer bodice for balls and fêtes later. The bustle dresses of the 1870s and 1880s tended to be made of several different white-on-white fabrics used together—faille with cut velvet and lace, or satin with brocade and patterned ribbons. In the 1890s, dresses featured huge gigot sleeves, ruffled yokes, and high, stiff collars, the last a detail that, when revived for wedding dresses, has been called a wedding-band collar. Softer fabrics like chiffon and fluid silk came in at the turn of the century, when the decorative pattern of lace used at the high collar and yoke was likely to be repeated in insets around the hem.

Booing up, it seems, in a pink silk gazar bubble dress by Oscar de la Renta.

As hemlines for day and evening clothes rose during the teens, so did those of wedding dresses, until, by the end of the 1920s, they were knee length with long trains attached and worn with long veils. As formal evening weddings gained favor during this period, a fairly low neckline and almost no sleeves became acceptable. To compensate for their skimpiness, 1920s wedding dresses were often heavily embroidered with pearls, crystals, and rhinestones. Wedding dresses of the 1930s were among the most sophisticated

(Continued on page 112)

The third-most important feature of a wedding

IN ANCIENT CERAM, THE TRADITIONAL WEDDING FEAST CONSISTED OF TWO BAKED OPOSSUMS: A FEMALE FOR THE BRIDE, A MALE FOR THE GROOM. BY THE ELIZABETHAN AGE IT WAS THE CUSTOM FOR BRIDES AND GROOMS TO TRY TO KISS EACH OTHER OVER HUGE STACKS OF SWEET BUNS WHILE THEIR GUESTS NO DOUBT LAUGHED HEARTLESSLY IN THE MANNER OF WEDDING GUESTS EVERYWHERE. A FEW CENTURIES LATER, OPOSSUMS AND BUNS HAD EVOLVED INTO CAKES: QUEEN VICTORIA'S WAS A 300-POUND MONSTROSITY DECORATED WITH ROSES AND TOPPED WITH AN

Of Bridal Cakes

By Ann Hodgman

ice statue of Britannia. A century and a half after *that*, Jack Webb, the star of "Dragnet," had a wedding cake covered with police badges made of icing.

These days the wedding cake is probably the third-biggest attention getter at the wedding, after the bride and her dress. (The groom comes way down the list.) Many are now works of art in both taste and appearance. I would seriously consider switching careers to become a wedding-cake baker if I were not afraid that my capacity for eating icing might lead to cardiac arrest.

One person whose apprentice I would become in a second is Betty Van Norstrand. "She's the queen," several people assured me, and certainly Van Norstrand's cakes have amassed a treasury of gold and silver medals, including two golds and two silvers at the International Culinary Olympics, in Frankfurt, Germany, and another first prize for fancy decorated eggs (one of which had edible pullout drawers).

Van Norstrand, who is based at the International Pastry Arts Center, in Elmsford, New York, has a pleasantly calm demeanor despite the fact that on the day I saw her she was juggling the tasks of decorating a three-tier cake in Elmsford, driving it to a tea at the Seventh Regiment Armory, in Manhattan, and baby-sitting for twin grandchildren with the flu back in Westchester. This was actually a relatively placid day for her; when she was baking wedding cakes full-time and raising a family, she went without sleep most weekends during the summer. "Thursday and Friday nights, forget it," she told me.

The International Pastry Arts Center is one of my favorite places because its conference room is filled with cakes just sitting around waiting for passersby. In a huge kitchen near the conference room, amid sixty-pound barrels of corn syrup, trays of buttercream pansies, and electric mixers the size of small cars, Van Norstrand took three layers of a lemon-mousse cake covered in rolled fondant and slapped them around a little to knock off excess crumbs. Rolled fondant's flavor is nothing but sweet—it is made of cooked sugar and water—but its pure-white, marble-smooth (sometimes almost impenetrable) surface is unsurpassed for piping on very detailed designs.

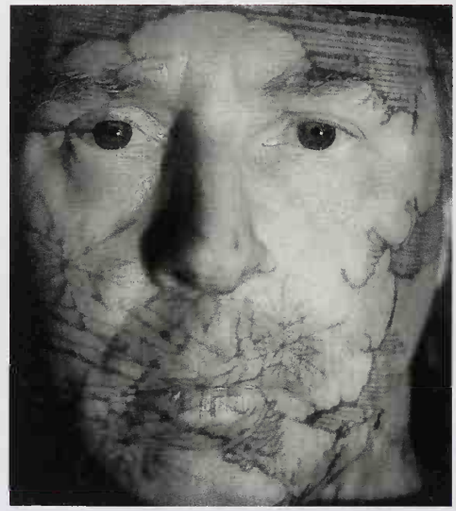
Van Norstrand then encased each layer in curved lace panels—she calls the panels "teardrop filigrees"—made of royal icing. The filigrees, which she had shaped over the side of a can to get the right curve, had taken her an entire day to make. The result was a miraculously delicate structure that looked more like a three-dimensional doily than a cake. (Van Nor-

(Continued on page 114)

Photograph by Josef Astor

A drop-dead wedding cake by Betty Van Norstrand baked for Connoisseur: *three heart-shaped tiers iced with fondant, decorated with white orchids and pale roses. The lace medallions are edible; ribbons and pearls are not.*

THE GERMAN PAINTER IS ALL THE RAGE, BUT HOW GOOD IS HE?



WOLFGANG WESENER

POLKE IN PERSPECTIVE

BY WALDEMAR JANUSZCZAK

The German contribution to postwar art has certainly been a peculiar one. How could a nation so justly celebrated for its powers of organization and its ruthless efficiency have produced such an irredeemably wayward collection of artistic misfits as Joseph Beuys (who made sculpture out of lard and felt); Gerhard Richter (who paints terrorists); Blinky Palermo (who was born as Peter Schwarze but took the name of a boxing promoter and mob figure); A. R. Penck (who was born Ralf Winkler but took the name of the geologist Albrecht R. Penck, coauthor of *The Alps in the Ice Age,* of 1909); Georg Baselitz (who paints upside down); Anselm Kiefer (who has wrongly been suspected of having neo-Nazi interests but was recently awarded the prestigious Wolf Prize in the arts by the Israeli president); and, above all, Sigmar Polke, who is to modern art what the sphinx was to the Greeks? Does anyone out there know what his work is about?

Judging by what has been written about him in the catalog of his first major American show, the answer is a lightly qualified "No." Sigmar Polke (his name is pronounced, as he says, like "Paul Klee") has managed to bamboozle an entire book's worth of curators and art critics. "The task of precisely defining his achievements," admit the directors of four major American museums, who have a go in a kind of joint communiqué at the head of the volume, is "an elusive enterprise."

"Elusive" is one of those words that we art critics reach for when we have nothing very concrete to say about an artist's achievements. Another word is "refractory," which Peter Schjeldahl is forced to employ in the very first sentence of his contribution to the Polke tome. Elusive, refractory, puzzling, unknowable, recondite, abstruse, indefinable—these adjectives of defeat pepper the prose of any piece about the artist. It is the ambition of this article to argue that they are unnecessary.

I have an advantage over most writers in that I have been to the town in which Polke was born. In 1976, Polke included a few short biographical words in a German exhibition catalog, in which he remembered, "Early influences, late results, or: How did the apes get into my scapes? and other icono-biographical questions."

German artists of the postwar years are a relentlessly cryptic bunch. Beuys, Kiefer, Baselitz, Polke—none of them has ever provided a genuinely straightforward commentary upon his own life and work. How did the apes get into Polke's scapes? Can this man, like John McEnroe's Wimbledon umpire, be serious? Yes. German artists prefer the poetic obfuscation and the double entendre to the clear statement of intent. They are, to a man, purveyors of mystery, conscious descendants of the nineteenth-century German Romantics, who, like Caspar David Friedrich, worked in direct opposition to the norms that prevailed in Germany and, by extension, in the modern industrial world. If modern Germany works with its brain, these postwar German misfits work with their hearts. If modern Germany is obsessed with material gains, they are obsessed with immaterial losses, with the way we were.

If modern Germany is super-efficient, they are super-careless. A Polke painting soaked in thick resin like a piece of overbuttered toast, featuring gaseous clouds of semitransparent, shit-colored pigmentation (see *The Spirits That Lend Strength Are Invisible,* Parts I–V), strikes me as a deliberate alternative to the kind of ruthlessly efficient precision engineering that went into the manufacture of your new Audi. Polke's art is cross-your-fingers art, the aesthetics of accident. His entire career is an attack upon twentieth-century materialism. The more gaseous his paintings become (and over the past five years, the move into gaseousness has been remorseless), the more closely they parallel those echoing sunsets and those vast, foggy skies of Friedrich.

We do not know much about Sigmar Polke. That is the way he likes to keep it. Real biographical information is very thin in the extensive Polke papers that have built up around him during his thirty-year career. Did he or did he not cross over from East Germany into the West in 1953 by feigning sleep on the subway? Polke likes to confuse his admirers by acting out a kind of make-believe life that exists only in his answers to interviewers. This is why the writer of the catalog for the huge show "German Art in the Twentieth Century," held in London in 1985, complained, "One of the few pieces of information about Polke's life to which we can give any credence is that he was born at Oels in Lower Silesia on 13 February 1941. Otherwise one should preserve a

PRIVATE COLLECTION COLOGNE

HOW ARE WE TO READ *ALICE IN WONDERLAND* (1971), WITH ITS INEXPLICABLE JUXTAPOSITION OF BASKETBALL PLAYER AND CATERPILLAR AND FEEL OF ALTERED CONSCIOUSNESS?

COURTESY THOMAS AMMANN, ZURICH

POLKE'S INSIDIOUS POLKA DOTS DISTURB THE ILLUSION OF LOVE BETWEEN THE MATINEE IDOLS IN *LOVERS II* (1965). IN THE LATER *CHILDREN'S GAMES* (1988), BOTH THE MEDIUM AND THE MOMENT ARE MUTABLE.

MUSEE NATIONAL D'ART MODERNE, CENTRE GEORGES POMPIDOU, PARIS, GIFT OF THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS OF THE MNAM (1989)

healthy scepticism, especially when he tells his own story."

There is something both ninja and turtlelike about these complicated biographical maneuvers: is Polke being creatively elusive, or does he have something to hide? It is surely not a coincidence that Ralf Winkler, Blinky Palermo, and Gerhard Richter all came from East Germany. And all, like Polke, escaped to the West, as, in a sense, did Markus Lüpertz, who was born in what was then annexed Czechoslovakia. The trickiness of these German malcontents, their lack of straightforwardness, is a legacy of the Cold War. They share a mistrust of saying what they mean. Real twentieth-century history has risen up from the pages of the textbooks to affect their lives physically, and permanently.

But to meditate upon Polke's early influences may suggest how his paintings contracted that sense of aesthetic disorder that is their chief characteristic. As I have already said, I have been to Oels. It is not called Oels anymore. Today it is called Oleśnica, and it is situated in western Poland, to the north of Wroclaw (or Breslau, as the Germans called it), in Silesia, as we call it (or Slask, as the Poles call it, or Slezsko, as the Czechs call it, or Schlesien, as the Germans themselves prefer). If you are looking for the source of those wild, interdimensional leaps that are a feature of Polke's art, that sense of a shifting and cracked reality, you must surely begin the search here in Schlesien.

Oleśnica is a dump, a typically gray slab of new Poland, a town in which the ruins of a sophisticated Prussian culture poke out through the grime of an unsophisticated Communist attempt at industrialization. In Oleśnica, two unhappy societies have collided, a Germany in exile and a Poland in captivity. They sit there side by side, looking as awkward in each other's company as the basketball player and the caterpillar in that picture by Polke called *Alice in Wonderland*. Inexplicable juxtapositions are one of Polke's favorite methods of making a point.

In Oleśnica, on the outskirts, the farmers still keep geese as watchdogs. The geese chase you down the path and snap at your ankles if you approach. When the German tanks rolled into Poland a year and a half before Sigmar Polke was born, they rolled

quickly through Oleśnica, then part of eastern Germany. The geese squawked to no avail. The Germans set up watchtowers on the perimeters of their camps, and in the fabric of daily Silesian life these German watchtowers took the place, if you like, of the geese. Industry replaced nature.

There is a picture by Polke called *Watchtower with Geese*. Like much of his work, it carries no clear message, providing, instead, a very resonant set of insinuations. The juxtaposition of geese and watchtower forms a gloomy pictorial partnership that speaks of the past. However, on the right-hand side of the picture is a strip of cheap cloth featuring a bright pattern of beach umbrellas, sunglasses, and deck chairs, the usual trappings of a modern German holiday on the Mediterranean. These horribly inappropriate beach accoutrements speak of the present. Somewhere within this Bermuda triangle of images, within the configuration of the watchtower, the geese, and the beach umbrellas, a protest is being voiced about the spiritual state of today's Germany. Polke paints indictments.

That is the major difference between him and his modern American imitators, notably Salle and Schnabel, who paint celebrations. Salle took Polke's unexpected juxtapositions and applied them to the soft-porn world of girlies and TV. Where Polke plunders jagged panes of different historical realities and reconstitutes them in a new order, Salle uses the same technique to go channel-hopping around favorite corners of the same historical reality—New York in the 1980s: a beaver shot here, a consumer durable there, some exciting wallpaper, a flash of money.

Polke was twelve when he made his escape into the West. What did this young runaway from Oels see when he arrived in the new world and opened his eyes after having feigned sleep on the subway (thus paralleling Alice's arrival in Wonderland)? He saw goodies: things to eat, things to wear, things to watch, things to smoke (like that hookah pipe the caterpillar is puffing away at in Polke's vision of *Alice*). These goodies became the subject of the marvelous suite of Pop-art paintings he produced in the early sixties. It is not your usual Pop art. It is Pop art *à la Berlinaise:* its taste is bitter, flavored with George Grosz, sprinkled with caricature, spiced with Dada.

When I look at Polke's paintings of various species of plastic utensil—tubs, buckets, bowls—arranged like different varieties of bird's eggs in an ornithology book, I doubt his sincerity immediately. The preciousness with which he endows these everyday objects (by laying them out so carefully into categories) is deliberately spurious. It is the preciousness of a museum transferred to the trash of a home. Such artistic sarcasm (which Polke has never lost) is entirely absent from, say, Warhol's images of Brillo boxes. Warhol celebrates with a wow! Polke indicts with a sneer.

Sigmar Polke is to modern art what the sphinx was to the Greeks.

THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

THE TRIANGLE OF IMAGES IN *WATCHTOWER WITH GEESE* (1987–88) SUGGESTS SOMETHING ABOUT THE SPIRITUAL STATE OF MODERN GERMANY.

PRIVATE COLLECTION, NEW YORK. COURTESY THE DAVID NOLAN GALLERY

THE WITTY *JAPANESE DANCERS* (1966), IN THE POP-ART TRADITION.

The same, confusing complexity of attitudes shows up in all Polke's work. Has the artist come to praise Wonderland, or has he come to damn it? Does Sigmar Polke like polka dots or not? Polke has always painted polka dots, and I do not imagine it to be a coincidence: these German confuseniks adore puns and convoluted, symbolic wordplay. When Polke and his fellow East German escapee Gerhard Richter were looking for a name for their own brand of German Pop art, they plumped for "Capitalist Realism," a variation on Stalin's beloved "Socialist Realism," which I confess to finding lame (but which others hold up as a brilliant example of the artist's wit).

I prefer to look for Polke's wit in the cheeky ballpoint drawings produced in the early sixties in which the Polke polka dot made its initial appearance as a determined questioner of reality, a kind of mobile clown's nose that undermines the seriousness of whatever face it is attached to.

Lovers II, from 1965, is almost a routine slice of Pop art; two matinee-idol lovers (he wears a tuxedo; she wears a smile), snuggling up together in a clichéd clinch. Into this celluloid vision of ideal romance Polke introduced an intruder, the polka dot, a mutant descendant of the inker's dots that Lichtenstein had already isolated and celebrated. Polke's printer's dots have gremlinesque ambitions to disturb the status quo of any scene they enter. A cluster of these dots springs up around the female lover's face like an attack of chicken pox. They comprehensively destroy her poise. Another illusion of love is shattered.

Elsewhere in Polke's work the polka dots were tied more closely to their typographical source. In a series of blowups of newspaper photographs of various kinds of modern girl (*Playboy* Bunnies, fashion models, glamorous Japanese dancers) the enlarged dots

(Continued on page 115)

RETURN OF THE CONVERTIBLE

BY LESLEY HAZLETON

Women call them "man traps." Men call them "woman magnets." Regardless of gender, there is something about convertibles that makes you feel as if you are seventeen again, no matter what the clock says. Drive a Mazda Miata at seventy miles an hour down a curving back road, and you feel as if you are driving a hundred and forty in anything else.

Somewhere out there, in the great untracked expanses of the American mind, there is probably someone who does not like convertibles. Someone who has never had a gleam in the eye. Someone who gets no pleasure from wind in the hair, from open air on the arms, from the smells of woods and forests, or the sight of stars and moon above. Someone who has never imagined that, if you drive fast enough, you can drive under the rain. Someone who has never had a fantasy of leaping over the door into the seat *à la* James Bond, or heading off into a *Gone with the Wind* sunset. Someone, in other words, with no sense of romance.

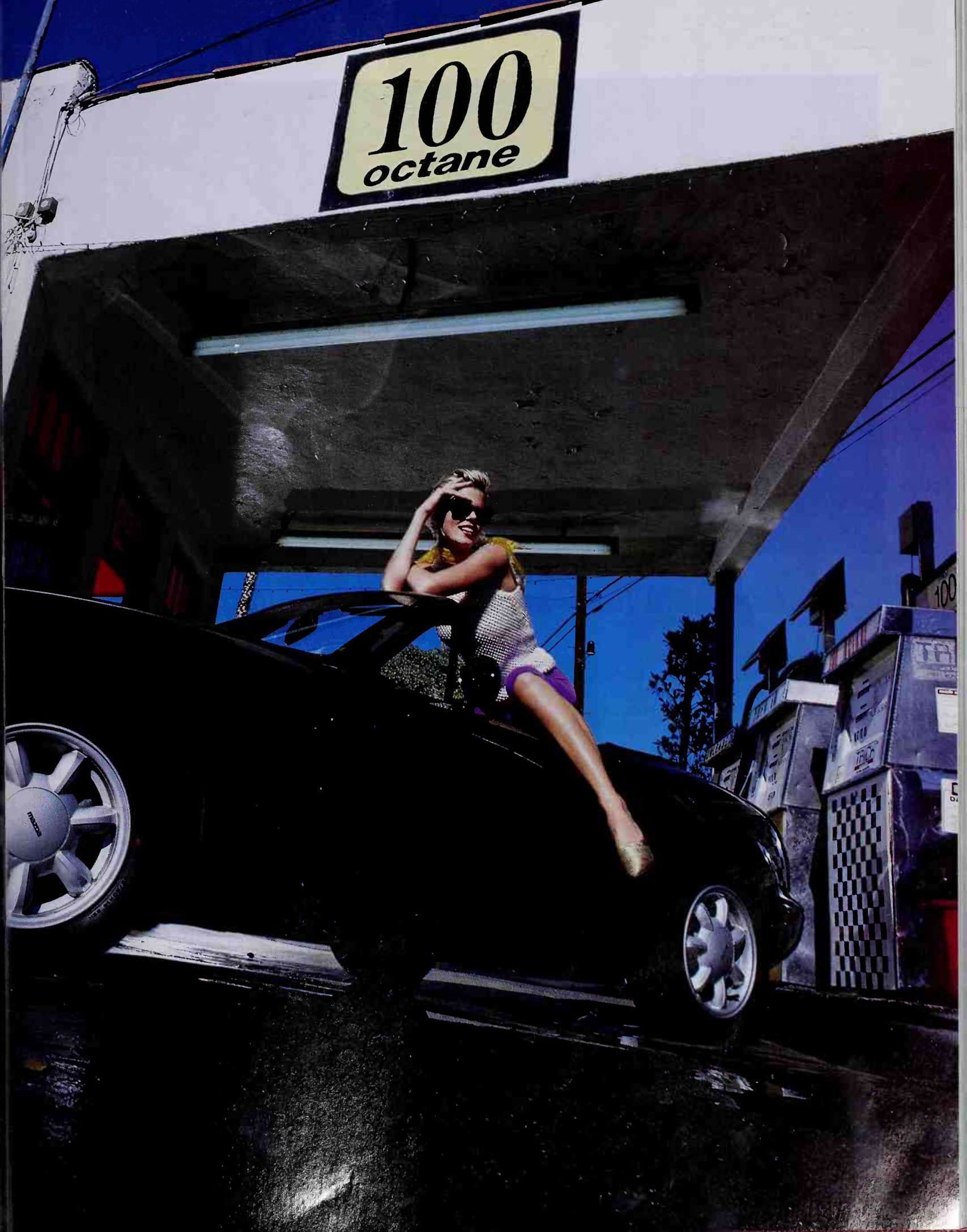
For a while—for a decade or so, in fact, from the early seventies through the early eighties—it looked as though all of America were made up of such people. There simply were no mass-market convertibles. It was downright un-American. Oh, there were a few convertibles still available, of course, for a price: the Rolls-Royce Corniche; the Alfa Romeo Spider; the Mercedes-Benz 450SL, 380SL, or 560SL; a privately done chop-top. But that was just about it. Detroit no longer made them.

NEAL PETERS COLLECTION

Now, all that has changed, as a glance at any crowded freeway will confirm. Every automaker seems to have a slick (or jaunty) convertible on its list. The story of this remarkable comeback stars—a

Is it Steve McQueen or his Porsche Speedster she finds so irresistible? Right: The sensual lines of the new, limited-edition Miata brook no competition.

PHOTOGRAPH BY MARK HANAUER. STYLIST, LAUREN EHRENFELD. HAIR AND MAKEUP, JEANNE TOWNSEND. CLOTHES AVAILABLE AT I. MAGNIN. LOCATION, CANYON SERVICE, SANTA MONICA CANYON, CALIF.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RON KIMBALL

"Since we only live some seventy years, it is...irresponsible

little unfairly, automobile historians will say—the Mazda Miata. And the story of how *it* came into being—by now legend—begins with Bob Hall, then an automotive journalist who spent much of his aborted college career in Japan as an exchange student; the Mazda chairman Kenichi Yamamoto, then the company's director of research and development; and a Triumph Spitfire. It goes as follows:

On a trip to Japan in 1978, just at the time when the great British sports cars—MG and Triumph—were being phased out of production, Hall suggested that Yamamoto take a spin in a Spitfire, just to see the glory of what had been. Yamamoto did so, and never forgot the joy of that ride. The next time he saw Hall, he asked the reporter what kind of car he thought Mazda should be making. Hall grabbed a piece of chalk and, speaking rapidly, as always, but this time in fluent Japanese, sketched a little sports convertible. Two years later, Hall was offered a job as product planner in Mazda's newly expanded American headquarters, in Irvine, California. "Don't forget your lightweight sports car, Bob-san," said Yamamoto—an unnecessary comment, since Bob Hall never forgets a car, let alone one he has dreamed up.

ROY D. QUERY/© AUTOMOBILE QUARTERLY, 1991

CINDY LEWIS

Top: The 1962 roadster version of the Mercedes-Benz. Before and after: the 1957 Porsche Speedster and the more aerodynamic 1989 Porsche 911. Most cars look better with a ragtop. Put a ragtop on a 911, and you spoil those beautiful, Bauhaus lines.

In a position paper distinguished in the automotive world for its lyricism—in sharp contrast to the prevalence of specifications, bottom-line figures, and marketing assessments—Hall wrote what is basically a manifesto for the convertible, including this passage: "Since we only live some seventy or eighty years, it is both impractical and irresponsible to refuse the simple happiness the convertible brings. When your top comes down, a two-dimensional world explodes into three, and you discover an enormous, ever-moving dome of sky and cloud, of sun and stars. You breathe more deeply, your vision clears."

Heady stuff, and hard to resist. The manifesto won the day. Hall called two old friends, top designers at GM (Mark Jordan) and BMW (Tom Matano), and hired them away to develop the first mass-market car since the midsixties that was designed specifically as a convertible. The little rear-drive two-seater, which called to mind the classic British ragtops, took eight years to perfect. Unlike its antecedents, however, this

one left no oil stains in the driveway. The top, though it was still manual, could be raised and snapped into place with one hand in just a few seconds. And, most striking of all, the price was absolutely right: from just under $14,000 to just over $18,000, depending on the options that were desired.

What resulted was called Miatamania. If any doubts lingered that the convertible was back, big-time, they were immediately dispelled. The car was an instant sellout when it came out, in 1989, with dealers asking for "market adjustments" of up to 100 percent in the first few months.

You can actually find a Miata at list price now—in fact, if you choose your region and month well, you can find one at under list (the Northeast in the ice of winter, for example, or Louisiana in the sweltering height of summer). Mazda is selling close to forty thousand a year, but they are so distinctive that it seems there are more of them on the road than that.

The Miata's instant success raises two questions. What happened to the convertible in the seventies? Who or what was responsible for suppressing America's favorite car over the course of more than a decade?

CINDY LEWIS

COURTESY CADILLAC MOTORS

Above: Today's best-selling Chrysler LeBaron. Below: The "last" Cadillac Eldorado (1976).

Nader. That was the buzzword about the demise of the convertible. Nader had done it, with all the safety regulations and the anxiety about rollovers. He had driven the convertible off the road.

Not so, says Bob Hall. True, Nader helped create congressional support for the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1966, but since the rollover requirements that resulted from that act applied to roof strength, convertibles were automatically exempted. No, says Bob, what did in the convertible back then was . . .

"Did you say air-conditioning?" I checked.

He had. The price of air-conditioning came down dramatically in the early seventies. Until then, it had been popular only on luxury cars; now, it was offered at least as an option on just about every car. Convertible sales went from 6 percent of the market to 3 percent, and as M.B.A.'s began to flood the executive halls of the auto industry, the bottom line took greater control of the production line. The M.B.A.'s, says Hall, with unusual restraint, introduced "a less extrovert feeling in the industry."

I could not figure out why Bob Hall should be so set on not blaming Nader. After all, Nader is still every auto manufacturer's favorite bogeyman. But in weeks of talking to one manufacturer after another, I found not one who blamed Nader for the disappearance of the convertible.

I called another top bogeyman of the auto industry—Clarence Ditlow, the director of the Center for Auto Safety, who said flat-out, "I don't think we ever said 'Boo' about convertibles. In a free society, you make certain choices, and we never felt it was worth pointing out the obvious. Clearly, people who wanted to buy a convertible would be aware that there was a greater risk in the event of a rollover."

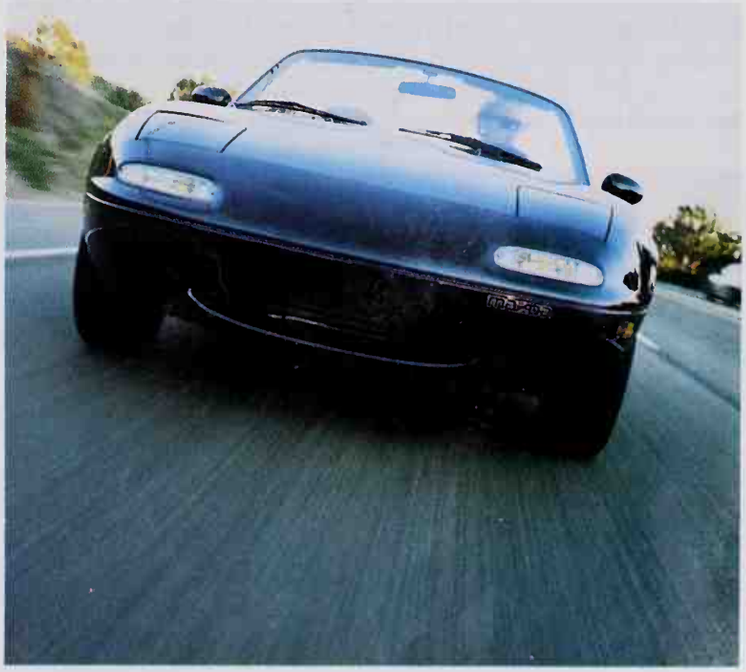
Well, then, maybe extortionate insurance rates helped doom the convertible. But Brian O'Neill, the president of the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, another man who never gets valentines from Detroit, insists that no, insurance rates were never influenced by the fact of a car's being a convertible, unless of course it was a sports car. "The only extra risk with a convertible was a rollover. These tend to be serious crashes, but they are relatively rare. Insurance rates are determined primarily by more-common and less severe crashes."

Ditlow probably came closest to what a few Detroit executives hinted at but could not quite bring themselves to say. "It was strictly a dumb marketing decision," he said, with characteristic forthrightness. "Back in the early seventies, Detroit wasn't interested in any vehicle that sold under a few hundred thousand a year. They were just fat, happy, and dumb."

Since then, Japanese competition has changed the face of American production. Detroit has finally discovered "lean production"—the Japanese system whereby you can change a production line relatively quickly, making smaller runs of any model economically viable. In today's market, Detroit is happy to compete in "niche segments," where thirty thousand a year of any model is a good sale.

In short, the disappearance of the convertible was not due

to refuse the simple happiness the convertible brings."



MARK HANAUER

The Miata, an instant classic and object of automobilic lust.

to safety regulations. It was due to bad business practices. And to anyone who still imagines that safety advocates hate convertibles, both Ditlow and O'Neill point out a current anomaly: because of new laws mandating passive restraints, the new generation of convertibles is probably safer than most hardtop cars on the road. Since all new cars must have either automatic seat belts or air bags, and since you cannot put an automatic seat belt on a convertible (there is no upper door frame to attach it to), all convertibles now have air bags, which are generally considered safer, when used together with manual belts, than automatic belts.

Moreover, some of the new generation of convertibles have roll bars. "Look at that automatic roll bar on the new Mercedes convertibles," says Ditlow. "It's fantastic!" It is, in fact, a stunning demonstration of high technology. The moment two wheels leave the ground on the new 500SL or 300SL, a roll bar pops up automatically in one third of a second. In slow motion, it is as much a delight to watch as the complex mechanism of the automatic soft-top, which does an elegant minuet of folding and unfolding in a matter of a few seconds.

NEAL PETERS COLLECTION

"The last American convertible"—or so people thought—was the 1976 Bicentennial Edition Cadillac Eldorado, which was marketed with much fanfare as the relic of an era. There is a story doing the rounds that Cadillac is being sued by a disgruntled customer who bought four of them, expecting his investment to accrue in satisfying leaps and bounds as the age of convertibles receded into history. But that story seems to be as apocryphal as the one about the woman whose husband ran off with his secretary and then cabled his wife telling her to sell his Porsche 911 and send him the proceeds. She sold the car, the story goes, for fifty dollars.

The first of the new generation of convertibles came, ironically, from the one company that seemed least able to take a risk: Chrysler, just at the time it was facing bankruptcy.

Chrysler's all-or-nothing gamble—Iacocca's gamble—was the K-car, a new platform that formed the basis of the LeBaron, the Aries, and the Reliant. The decision to produce the LeBaron as both a coupe and a convertible came in February 1980, remembers Tom Gale, now vice-president of product design at Chrysler and then part of the company's concept-car group. Normally a calm, restrained man, Gale comes alive when the subject turns to convertibles. "I was certainly surprised—everyone was—that Lee had decided on a convertible," he says, "and obviously, as a designer, delighted. A lot of marketing guys estimated convertible sales would range from zero to four thousand. But Lee said, 'Nonsense; if we can't sell twelve thousand of these, I'll eat my shirt.' "

PHOTOFEST

In the fifties, convertibles upstaged actors—Rock Hudson and the jinx Shirley MacLaine.

The disappearance of the convertible for more than a decade

Not to cast any aspersions on the quality of Lee Iacocca's shirts, he was to eat more-satisfying fare. Chrysler brought back the mass-market convertible with the LeBaron in 1983 and had to double production almost immediately. In 1985 it accounted for 35 percent of all convertibles sold. The front-wheel-drive four-seater is still the best-selling convertible in the United States—it was completely redesigned in 1988. "The odd thing about the convertible," says Gale, "is that it went away for the wrong reasons, and it didn't come back for the right reasons. It was Iacocca's intuition that brought it back—and you have to respect that—but it would be still nicer if we could look back and say that we'd been brilliant analysts and seen the growing spirit of personal expression out there in the marketplace."

By now, nearly every manufacturer produces at least one ragtop version of a hardtop: the Toyota Celica, the BMW 318 and 325, the Saab 900, the Dodge Shadow, the Jaguar XJ-S, to name a few. The Corvette and the Mustang are all back as convertibles; new ones will include a ragtop of the Infiniti M30 and the Firebird.

For the most part, they look wonderful. The only exception is

CINDY LEWIS

A bulge too many: male-fantasy car, the 1955 Jaguar, like a Corvette on steroids.

NEILL BRUCE/© AUTOMOBILE QUARTERLY, 1991

JOE BARABAN

Left: Rare, racing version of the Austin-Healey. Above: This year's Alfa Romeo Spider. Below: Fifties icon, tail-finned Cadillac, ready to blast off.

the Porsche 911, the classic twenty-six-year-old design that keeps looking better by the year. Perhaps the problem is that the 911 was too well designed in the first place. Putting a ragtop on it, as Porsche has, spoils those beautiful, Bauhaus lines. With a ragtop, just about anything else looks great.

Probably the best-known convertible version of a hardtop is the Ford Mustang, one of the top contenders in the bang-for-the-buck category. The Chevy Corvette is another big-bang contender. Honda is currently designing a prototype to compete with the Miata.

But purists still go for those cars designed specifically as convertibles, classics like the Lotus Elan and the Alfa Romeo Spider, and relative newcomers such as the Cadillac Allante, the Mercury Capri, and Mazda's RX-7. And purist hearts will be uplifted by the fact that within a few months of the stunning debut of the Miata, the rumor mill had it that a new MG was in the wings from Rover. Will any of these induce the kind of nostalgia that led to Bob Hall's creation of the Miata? Obviously, it is still too early to tell. □

due not to safety regulations but to bad business practices.

RON KIMBALL

Convertible Nostalgia

Bob Hall, the college dropout who dreamed up the Mazda Miata, is getting over a bout of flu. He is doing it by talking about classic convertibles. And since, as you might expect, the man is nuts on the subject, the cure works. Within five minutes a new fever flushes his cheeks. This just a little too heavy, almost middle-aged man has that gleam in his eyes of any red-blooded American boy talking cars. It was this passion that led to his creation of the Miata, the instant classic that has been the object of autophilia ever since its introduction, two years ago. Once he gets going, it is hard to stop Bob. Within minutes, he is rolling off his own, quirky and iconoclastic list of classic convertibles. Here they are, in more or less chronological order, with suitable commentary:

- the Jaguar XK-120 roadster, from the late forties to the midfifties—"the car that really established Jaguar"
- the Austin-Healey 100S—"really rare, the racing version of the Healey they built in '54 or '55"
- the '55, '56, or '57 Chevy Bel Air—"icons of the fifties"
- the '57 Plymouth Belvedere—"fifties to the nth degree"
- the '59 Cadillac—"the tallest fins of any car ever built"
- Ferraris—"especially any California Spider, and the 330 GTs"
- the Jaguar XKE—"probably the most sensuous form that has ever been dropped into the marketplace"
- the Porsche 356 Speedster—"like sitting in a pillbox, with that low roof, but unbelievably sexy"
- the late-fifties Mercedes-Benz 300SL—"the roadster version of the legendary gull wing, but a much better car to drive, and probably underpriced today compared to the gull wing"
- '64, '65, and '66 Mustangs—"icons of sixties culture"
- the Alfa Romeo Duetto Spider in the sixties—"nicknamed the squid tail"
- the Austin-Healey Sprite Bugeye—"a crossover of fifties and sixties, an absolutely minimalist automobile and a ball to drive"
- the '64 Chevy Impala SS—"because Napoleon Solo drove one in 'The Man from U.N.C.L.E.' "
- the '65 Corvette— "the first year of four-wheel disc brakes and the last year of fuel injection, so the best of both worlds"

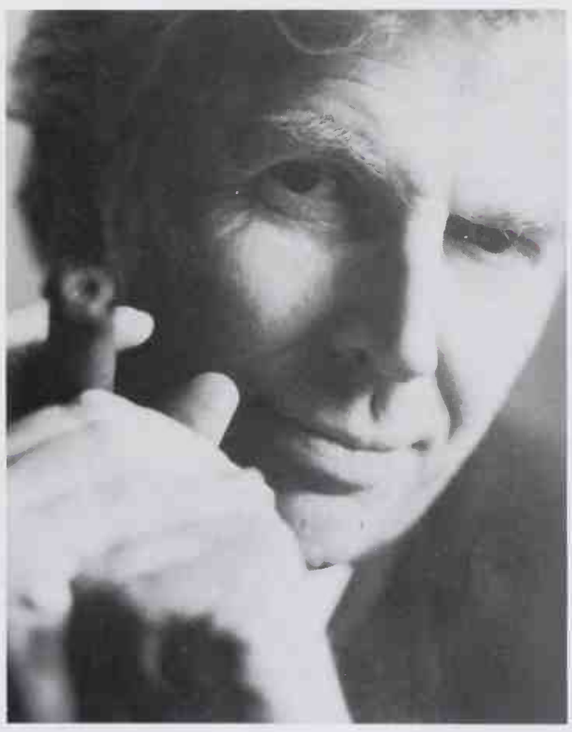
Hall's personal favorites: "The '57 DeSoto, probably a Fireflight, or a '58 DeSoto Firesweep, and the '58 Edsel Pacer convertible."

An Edsel? "Sure. I always liked it. Nobody was dumping on it when it was first introduced. They only started that when they found it wasn't selling as they wanted. Those cars were so fifties. My Edsel would be two-tone, of course: sunset coral and charcoal brown. Name a more fifties color combination! They'll never build cars like the DeSotos or the Edsels again, cars that are that big, that gaudy, that . . ."—and for once, words desert Bob Hall—"that *that*!"

Lesley Hazleton, author of Jerusalem, Jerusalem *and* England, Bloody England, *is the automobile correspondent of* Lear's.

Not for Egoists Only

BY LETITIA JETT-GUICHARD



Upper right: Jacques Polge, Chanel's "nose." Lower right: Jacques Helleu, Chanel's artistic director, who has conjured up the private world of an égoïste.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY CLAUS WICKRATH

IN FRANCE THERE IS A QUAINT AND SACRED TRADITION KNOWN AS THE *CADEAU DE RUPTURE,* COMMEMORATING ONE OF LIFE'S POIGNANT MOMENTS, THE END OF A LOVE AFFAIR. LIKE SO MANY OTHER IMPORTANT OCCASIONS—ENGAGEMENTS, MARRIAGES, ANNIVERSARIES—THIS LESS FORMAL YET NO LESS SIGNIFICANT PASSAGE IS MARKED BY GIFT GIVING. NORMALLY THIS EXCHANGE INCLUDES CAREFULLY CHOSEN OBJECTS, OFTEN ENGRAVED, MEANT TO SERVE AS LASTING SOUVENIRS OF THE RELATIONSHIP, TO BE LOOKED BACK UPON WITH NOSTALGIA (AND SOONER OR LATER TO BE DISCOVERED BY THE LATEST OBJECT OF ONE'S AFFECTION). COULD CHANEL POSSIBLY HAVE BEEN THINKING OF THIS STICKY SITUATION WHEN IT INTRODUCED ITS LATEST PERFUME FOR MEN, RELEASED IN APRIL IN THE UNITED STATES AND BOLDLY NAMED ÉGOÏSTE? WHAT SWEET REVENGE TO GIVE A *CADEAU DE RUPTURE* WITH A MESSAGE! BUT CHANEL COULD

The campaign behind Chanel's new scent may be the most ambitious in perfume history

Égoïste itself! In America, the cologne concentrée and the eau de toilette are available; in Europe, only the eau de toilette.

PHOTOGRAPH BY CONSTANCE HANSEN STYLIST, ANITA CALERO; SCIENTIFIC EQUIPMENT, E. BUK

"Possession without obligation to the object possessed approaches felicity."

COURTESY CHANEL, INC. (3)

never be accused of such one-dimensional marketing initiatives. The birth and development of Égoïste mark one of the most ambitious and meticulously orchestrated campaigns in perfume history.

Using the working name "Bois Noir," Jacques Polge, Chanel's "nose" and the man who created Antaeus and Coco, started mixing formulas in 1986. "The perfume that finally became Égoïste was in fact an old idea for me," says the soft-spoken Polge. "Our press office asked me to re-edit some discontinued Chanel perfumes, and I discovered one, called Bois des Iles, made in the 1920s. I loved it. When I broke it down I realized it had a high percentage of sandalwood, so I built around that note and sort of masculinized the fragrance."

Despite its inspiration, Polge insists that he does not believe in unisex perfumes. "For me the concept does not exist. Of course we know many women wear men's fragrances, but I never construct a perfume with that in mind. 'Égoïste' implies that it is absolutely forbidden for a woman to wear it. What better way to tempt her than with something taboo?" Of the three men closely associated with Égoïste, Polge is the most self-effacing, although when it comes to his work he does say, "If I have a conviction, I have to impose my will. I can't have everyone telling me what to do in committee.

"One thing that does concern me somewhat is the name. After all, egoism is a fault, *n'est-ce pas*? I wonder if an American would continue a conversation with you if you called him an egoist. You see, in France you can carry on, because we are constantly calling one another egoistic—it isn't necessarily a fault. I am happy with the name, in any case. It resembles nothing else. The flacon is pure and beautiful, and the publicity is *formidable*."

The name and the publicity it inspired have attracted so much attention that the perfume itself might be overlooked, but Polge says Égoïste has doubled Chanel's share of the perfume market in Europe and is the second-best-selling fragrance, after Chanel No. 5.

Still, it is Jacques Helleu's audacious promotion campaign that sets Égoïste apart. Never mind the all too familiar notion of selling a product as "life-style." In one, flamboyant stroke, Helleu, artistic director of Chanel perfumes, has made life-style marketing once again the dernier cri. With Jean-Paul Goude, whom he commissioned to create the film for the Égoïste commercial, he moved beyond the realm of mere fiction and fantasy into a Frenchman's favorite playground, his heated imagination. Helleu conjured up in mind-boggling detail the private world in which an egoist has his being. And Goude made the ultimate comment on the subject with a dramatic, archly droll motif, the wronged woman.

Helleu chose the perfume's name because "when a woman thinks of a man it's the first word that comes into her mind." It is a word that has been put to challenging use more than once in the last century or so. George Meredith called a novel of 1879 *The Egoist*. "Possession," he wrote, "without obligation to the object possessed approaches felicity." From 1914 to 1919 a literary review was published in London with that name; James Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* was one of its most distinguished contributions. Most recently, *Egoïste* was the name of a Paris-based publication, from whose owner, Nicole Wisniak, Helleu bought the rights for its use. "I do think that in general the French are more egoistic than others," Helleu says. "They have a sense that they are unique!"

Cultivating the image is just what Chanel set out to do in its Parisian campaign, a year ago last April. First the egoist was given a profession: architect. Then he was given an apartment, set up and decorated down to every last, honey-and-beige leather-and-silk detail by Christian Benais in the company's headquarters, in Neuilly. Best of all, the egoist kept a self-indulgent diary in a scribbling hand, punctuated with fanciful sketches, in which he admits, "All of me I give, except myself." Further on he notes, "I am my own man . . . , and my qualities come from this single, absolute fact." Then he turns to Nietzsche: "What is the seed of freedom? Not to be ashamed of oneself." And so on. On the last page he writes that "Sophie" has given him a gift of Égoïste, about which he muses perceptively, "You could be right."

While all of this was being devised to intrigue the press, the second stage of the campaign,

Above: Trompe l'oeil hotel façade outside of Rio. Below: Actresses declaim poetic ani madversions on the égoïste *who has wronged them.*

The thirty-second TV commercial proved every bit as opulent as an evening at Versailles.

aimed at a much smaller and more select audience, was under way. Chanel sent out invitations to 3,000 VIPs in politics, business, sports, and the arts, including Minister of Culture Jack Lang, Prime Minister Michel Rocard, and the Hachette chairman and CEO Jean-Luc Lagardère, to kick off their shoes, turn on their television sets, and watch a fifty-two-minute film, *La Règle du JE* (wordplay: not "the rules of the game," *jeu,* but the rules of "I," *je*). This homage to egoism—interrupted three times with a commercial—was to be enjoyed while one dined on haute cuisine and champagne catered by the Ritz and delivered to one's home. Gifts of Égoïste products arrived the same day.

It is well known that when it comes to perfume launches, opulent one-upmanship is the order of the day. Karl Lagerfeld took over the château Vaux-le-Vicomte; Christian Lacroix threw a bash at the Opéra Comique with the Gipsy Kings, the cost of which was covered in a nine-month, worldwide promotion budget; and Guerlain sent off Samsara at the Musée Guimet. Although Chanel never divulges figures, Jacques Helleu does admit that the Égoïste campaign cost "more than anyone can imagine."

The Égoïste television commercial, featuring the decor of a grand hotel and numerous Chanel-clad actresses, though only thirty seconds long proved every bit as opulent as an evening at Versailles and certainly more costly. Imagined and produced by Goude, whose parade of 8,000 on the Champs-Elysées was the high point of the French Bicentennial Bastille Day celebrations, the clip called for the construction of a trompe l'oeil façade of a famous hotel in Cannes. This took two weeks to erect on location outside of Rio and when completed featured mannequins on balconies shouting poetic epithets referring to the egoist who had wronged them.

"It works on many levels," says Goude. "Macho men think the women are begging for more, and the other interpretation is that these women who have been betrayed by this selfish egoist are still under his spell, although they hate him. Even if all men are egoists they have to live with them. It's a metaphor for life."

Versions made for France featuring poetic alexandrines from Corneille's *Le Cid* (*"O rage! ô désespoir!"*), for Italy, Dante, and for Germany, Goethe were released simultaneously last spring. Originally Goude planned to use appropriate quotations from Shakespeare for the English video, but it didn't quite work. "I tried *The Merchant of Venice,* but the language was too archaic. It sounded phony. In the end, we just decided to leave the English version in French."

When Goude was first asked to do the commercial he was immersed in preparations for the Bicentennial parade. "One day in 1989 I was coming out of the subway in Moscow when I saw two women talking and I started thinking, I'll bet they're talking about the men in their lives and what egoists they are," Goude says. "That's when I got the idea for the theme—women complaining about men, with egoism as the undercurrent. Then every place we went, traveling for the Bicentennial, I would ask women if they thought men were egoists and they all said yes. As the idea developed, it became more lyrical, and I started thinking of poetry, rhythm, imagery, and it all fell into place."

Jean-Paul Goude, producer of the Égoïste film, shows actresses how a wronged woman feels.

Maybe Helleu and Goude are onto something. Perhaps egoism is the next international movement. The seventies Me generation is passé, the all-consuming eighties generation is attempting redemption, and very few believe in the selfless, caring society being touted to replace them. So why not egoism? Not to be confused with materialism, of course, or mere selfishness, it is a much more subtle, more resonant, more Proustian concept, and some of the most interesting egoists are even known to have a sense of humor. "An egoist is someone who does not devote herself entirely to me," says one French wag. But Karl Lagerfeld is more profound. "Egoism," he says, "is the strongest weapon against self-destruction." □

Letitia Jett-Guichard is the editor of the Paris-based, bilingual monthly Boulevard.

The trompe l'oeil façade took two weeks to erect outside of Rio.

An act of architectural bravado

From a distance, it appears to be a giant, geometric public sculpture. But as one approaches it, in Mexico City's fashionable suburb of Bosques de las Lomas, the house gives an entirely different impression. It looks like a rocket about to be launched from its cradle, high on the side of a cliff. So potent is its shape that one expects it to burst from its concrete mooring, lift off, and head back to the mysterious, otherworldly place it came from.

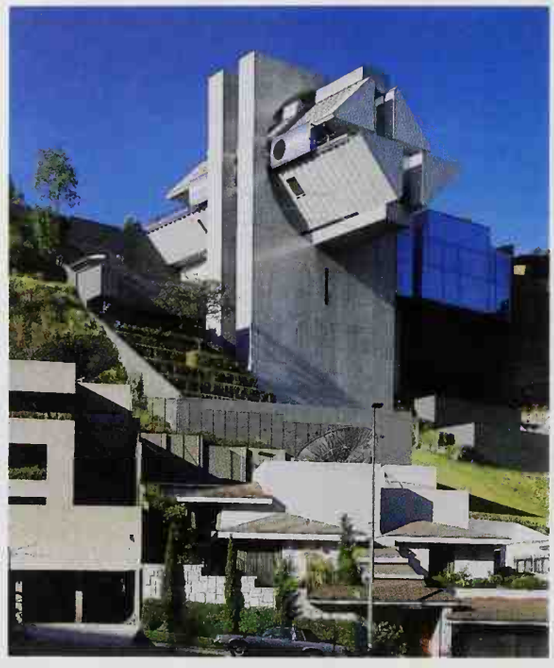
Actually, the house came off the Mexico City drawing board of Agustín Hernández, at age sixty-six one of the world's boldest, if least-publicized, architects. He designed it for a cousin, Roberto Hernández Ramírez, a bachelor father of three teenage daughters, who surely knew he was going to get something special. His architect kinsman has always shown a keen taste for the adrenaline rush of a stunt. Everything he builds is spectacular, fraught with symbolism, and a little eerie as well: the colossal Heroico Colegio Militar (designed with Manuel González Rul), near the city of Cuernavaca, looked just right in Arnold Schwarzenegger's recent sci-fi film *Total Recall,* set in the twenty-first century.

The new house might best be thought of as a triumph of mind over matter. The site it occupies is small and extremely difficult, a mountainside with a precipitous, sixty-five-degree incline. As if to preclude digging the house into the hillside, the client wanted a lordly power place, one that would take full advantage of the panoramic view of the serpentine valley below and the city in the distance. Then there were Agustín Hernández's personal imperatives: he feels, for instance, that architecture should project "ways by which our three-dimensional world can contain the limitless possibilities of multidimensional man."

How could all the requirements be met? Simple! Hernández, ever the stunt master, designed a "house in space."

First, he devised a way to make the house perch, literally, on the cliff wall. This he did by sinking a massive, horizontal steel beam deep into the hillside—the construction crew had to wear mountaineering gear during the job—and then hanging on it the six prefabricated steel modules that make up the body of the house. Most architects would declare the importance of the steel beam by displaying it. Not Hernández; he almost hides it, allowing the visitor to believe that two huge, vertical concrete pillars, through which the spaceship-like house seems to float, hold up the house. They only help to support the steel beam, which carries most of the weight of the house.

Essentially, this daring technique dictated the form of the project. Hernández does not for a moment disguise the sexual inspiration—quite the contrary, though he puts it poetically. The house is "an act of procreation between land and sky," critics have said, "a marriage between earth and space." And the shapes that express such a thought, at least for



THE HOUSE PERCHES ON A BARELY VISIBLE BEAM SUNK INTO THE HILLSIDE; THE GARDEN AND POOL STEP DOWN THE INCLINE.

Cliffhanger

BY KATHRYN LIVINGSTON

PHOTOGRAPHS BY TIM STREET-PORTER

STANDING NEAR THE FRONT ENTRANCE,

ONE MARVELS AT

THE MATERIALS AND WORKMANSHIP.

"The house is a marriage between earth and space."

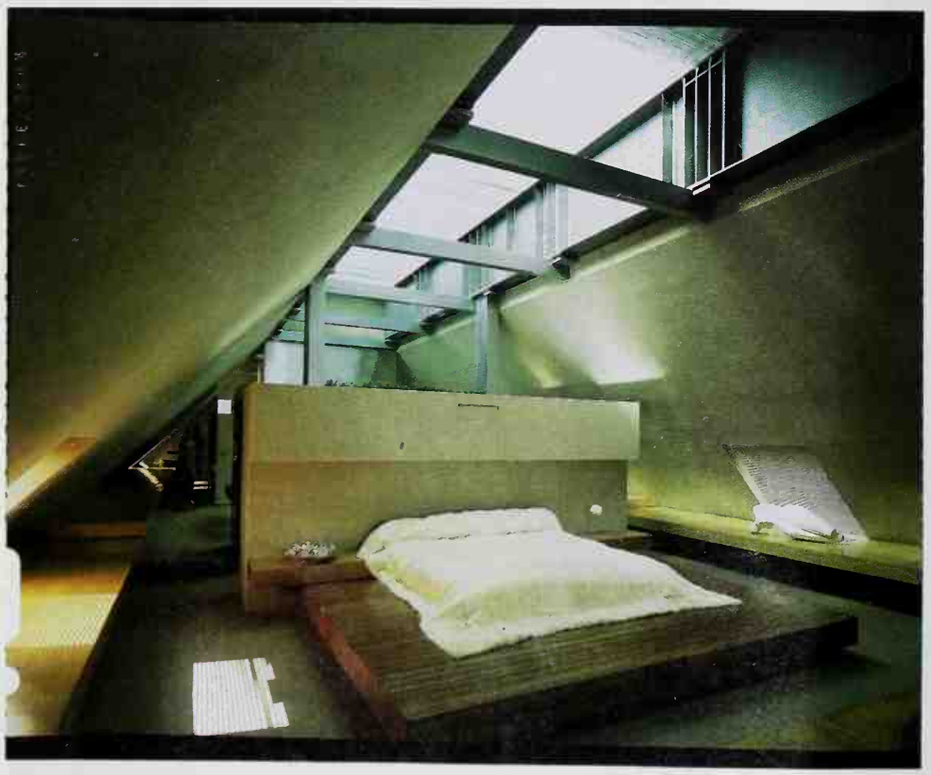
him, are precisely those that he believes also create the illusion of motion in something fixed—a square tube enclosed within a circle. (For added dynamism, the square is poised on the point of one of its angles.)

Once the exterior scheme was determined, Hernández took his symbolism further. Never afraid that he might repeat himself needlessly, he keyed the entire house to what he thinks of as the eternal, geometric symbol of contradiction: once again, the square in a circle. These shapes occur on the exterior of the building (many of the windows are round, for example) and as an interior decorative element (on doors, floors, wine racks; everywhere). The circle stands for the female, the soul, eternity, and heaven. The square represents the male, the body, tangible reality or nature, and the earth. The two shapes together serve as the geometric basis of the Aztec quincunx, the Chinese *tsong-pi,* and the Gothic rosette.

What are the advantages of such an extraordinary house? Most obvious, it offers a way to build on nonlevel land, albeit an expensive way. (When I asked Hernández the construction cost, he shrugged: "About the same as it would cost to buy a corporate jet—$1,330,000.") Architects tend to see in the house something of great benefit to their profession: an independent, invigorating, futuristic statement. And Mexicans proudly detect in it, as in all of Hernández's buildings, echoes of ancient, pre-Columbian building forms.

More important to the rest of us are the innovations in this house. Because it is hung in the air, it disregards the traditional rules of spatial organization. When visitors leave their cars in the parking lot, for instance, they enter the middle of the house; that is difficult to do in a house firmly rooted on the ground. The floor on which they find themselves contains a dining room, a kitchen, and a breathtaking, two-story living room, spilling into a glass balcony. Above is the vast master bedroom, with its king-size platform bed and swimming-pool-size Jacuzzi. Below are the daughters' rooms and, below them, quarters for the maids and mechanical equipment. The wine "cellar," a wonderful room on a separate, even lower level, has no connection with the ground.

Because the glass, steel, and concrete exterior of the house is high-tech, Hernández has gone out of his way to humanize the interiors. He has done this not with chintz and thick rugs but, more inventively, with light. As might be expected in a house surrounded by air, the architect believes in "windows that communicate with the sun, with the rain, with hail, with the passage of time." He has carefully considered the views: long ones that make the sky and clouds serve, in effect, as an ever changing garden; short ones that make the mountain slope into a friendly green rampart. The living-room floor has a small surprise: a glass balcony, through which light floods to the wine "cellar," creating interplays of light and shadow. Most thrilling of all, a part of the roof has a special, compressed-glass strip ceiling that allows light to pass in skittish flickers of continually changing rainbow hues: morning mauves, noontime golds, after-



THE MASTER BEDROOM HAS A COMPRESSED-GLASS CEILING; BEHIND THE BED ARE CLOSETS AND A VAST BATHROOM.

TOP: THE DINING ROOM, WITH ITS COMPRESSED-GLASS TABLE. BELOW: A STREET-LEVEL VIEW OF THE HOUSE.

"To build it cost about as much as a corporate jet."

noon aquas, and early-evening bottle greens.

In part, too, the interiors gain warmth simply through design. Although spare, pure, and slightly odd—the tilted exterior walls are not easy to get used to—they are beautifully proportioned and full of clean, sweeping forms. There is no real need for paintings and sculpture, because one already seems to be inside a mysterious sculpture. Natural materials are used wherever possible, and natural colors masterfully complement one another (the rosiness of wood, the iridescence of labradorite, the sheen of gray Mexican marble).

For a man who lavishes thought on the use of his buildings, Hernández harbors surprisingly little affection for furniture. He would happily outlaw dining-room chairs, he says, and would prefer to entertain buffet style anyway. (There are chairs in his cousin's house, but guests can also sit on neutral-colored banquettes or on forms built into the walls). Another quirk that might interfere with some people's enjoyment of the house is Hernández's perhaps excessive love of technology. Not a book can be seen in the pristine room known as the library. Instead, Dickens, Tolstoy, and Octavio Paz have been neatly filed away on easily accessible computer discs.

Outdoors, a swimming pool has been built into the slope, next to a multilevel tropical garden. The ground is so steep that the garden was, of necessity, terraced, with a precipitous walkway skirting the outcropping of rocks. No detail has been left to chance. Water from the pool is used as a fountain, cascading down three tiers to become a final waterfall between the two vertical pillars before being recycled back to the pool. At every stage, the water provides a lively, unpredictable view. "This is a wild house," says the Mexican architect Eduardo Terrazus. "Not a family house, but a power house. A money house. So were the houses built by Palladio."

One of Agustín Hernández's next jobs indicates his position as Mexico's top architect. He has been chosen to design a new international airport for Mexico City. Soon, too, he will turn to his first project outside his beloved Mexico: a gigantic shopping center, called Metro 2000, off the San Diego Freeway in Los Angeles near Long Beach. Preliminary sketches show an "orbiting" complex of intergalactic fantasies. However these jobs turn out, the architect is sure to follow the same methods he used in designing the airborne house: he begins with morphological doodles, which he then rationalizes into an intricate, Euclidian order. "My religion has always been geometry," he says, glorying in the magical complexities of abutting shapes and spaces. □

Kathryn Livingston is a free-lance writer based in New York.

THE STAIRCASE TO THE DAUGHTERS' ROOMS CONFORMS TO THE ARCHITECT'S INSISTENCE ON CIRCULAR SHAPES

THE LIVING ROOM, FULL OF SQUARES AND CIRCLES, IS LAVISHLY FURNISHED, BUT WITHOUT CHAIRS.

SPLENDOR IN THE GLASS

THE BENCHMARK OF ALL WHITE BURGUNDIES

BY FRANK WARD

PHOTOGRAPHS BY SALLY GALL

The chardonnay grape gives fine wines in many parts of the world, but only in Burgundy does it achieve complete perfection, with *premier cru* and *grand cru* white wines of matchless poise, finesse, and depth. The biggest single source of these lovely white burgundies is Puligny-Montrachet, a tiny village hemmed in by vineyards too precious to uproot. Within its bounds lie four of Burgundy's illustrious *grand cru* whites (it shares two of them with the village of Chassagne-Montrachet, next door) as well as seventeen superb *premiers crus*.

The most celebrated of Puligny's 528 inhabitants is Vincent Leflaive, the doyen of Domaine Leflaive. His small output is in such demand that even some of France's three-star restaurants cannot get a single bottle. *Cuisine et Vin de France* declares, "You do not buy Domaine Leflaive wines; you solicit the honor of exchanging money for them." For Clive Coates, a British wine writer, Leflaive wines are "the benchmark by which all white burgundy must be judged." The marquis d'Angerville, of Volnay, a leading authority and himself a top grower, says, "Leflaive wines epitomize white burgundy in full majesty. They are perfumed, full of finesse, have great elegance and purity, are long on the palate, and last extremely well."

Now seventy-eight, Vincent Leflaive has silver hair and blue eyes alive with humor and curiosity. His emphatic but sensitive features mirror his emotions, and his nostrils flare when he is in a peppery mood. He uses his powerful, actorish voice to great effect, reducing a room to total silence one moment and filling it with laughter the next. At bottom a kindly and informal man, he likes tweedy jackets and hardly ever wears a tie. Yet his innate elegance never deserts him. If you did not know that he was a top wine maker, you might take him for a poet or a film director.

We are in the light and airy office at the *domaine*'s manorial headquarters, on the edge of the village. An empty bottle of 1934 Bâtard-Montrachet stands on the stone mantelpiece; Vincent sits in a high-backed Burgundian chair at the big oak desk, talking about his approach to wine making. "The chardonnay doesn't really benefit from being aged entirely in new oak; the wine loses its freshness and becomes *boisé*, woody. That's why only twenty-five percent of our wine goes into new oak casks. The rest is matured in stainless-steel vats or older casks. If a cuvée looks like getting too oaky, we transfer it to a stainless-steel vat."

Today Domaine Leflaive owns twenty hectares (fifty acres) of vineyard, two-thirds of it in priceless *premier cru* and *grand cru* land. The Leflaive family can trace its Burgundian roots back as far as 1580 and has owned vineyards since 1735. The estate was brought to eminence in modern times by Joseph Leflaive, Vincent's father, who was in charge from 1905 to 1953. "When my father began building the *domaine* up," Vincent says, "it was almost nothing."

ELEGANT AND INFORMAL IN HIS GARDEN, VINCENT LEFLAIVE, DOYEN OF THE GREAT DOMAINE LEFLAIVE.

Joseph Leflaive inherited only two hectares of vineyard when he took over. Demand for wine was weak, and the vineyards were still largely derelict following the phylloxera epidemic of the 1880s. Well into the 1920s, vineyards were to be had for a song. Joseph bought as much land as he could, bit by bit building the *domaine* up to twenty-five hectares. The twenty now remaining include parcels in four *premier cru* vineyards—Combettes, Pucelles, Clavoillon, and Folatières—and three *grand cru*—Bâtard-Montrachet, Bienvenues-Bâtard-Montrachet, and Chevalier-Montrachet.

When he died, in 1953, he was succeeded by his two sons, Joseph and Vincent. Though they were forced to hold down outside jobs for the next nineteen years, running the *domaine* only on weekends, they soon began

THE PEOPLE OF THE TINY VILLAGE OF PULIGNY-MONTRACHET RIDE TO WORK IN THE VINEYARD AT DOMAINE LEFLAIVE ON THEIR BIKES.

ONE SOLICITS THE HONOR OF EXCHANGING MONEY FOR DOMAINE LEFLAIVE WINES.

to see improvements. The first real breakthrough came in 1953, with resolute help coming from the other side of the Atlantic. "Our American agents, Frederick Wildman & Sons, stepped in and helped us," Vincent recalls. "They advanced credit, buying the fifty-threes in advance, and thanks to them we were able to reconstitute the vineyards, buy new equipment, and start restoring the cellars and winery."

A man who prizes loyalty and decency, Vincent Leflaive has never forgotten the timely and steadfast support of his American friends. Wildman still gets a lion's share—25 percent—of these wines that everyone covets.

Later we are bumping along rutted tracks and over hills to see how the Chevalier grapes are faring. Vincent surveys the bunches, declaring that picking must be held off to the last possible moment to ensure maximum ripeness. I ask if he has any worries about the vintage. "I am always worried until all the grapes are in."

The Chevalier vineyard is on a steep slope and is composed mostly of sand and stones that litter the earth, absorbing heat during the day and reflecting it back at night. "It's easier to pick on this steep slope than on level ground. The grapes hang down into your hands. I once did three weeks of picking." His eyes widen comically. "I was dead! I ended up on my knees."

STYLIST: SARA BARBARIS

A PICNIC IN THE GRASS WITH A 1987 BÂTARD-MONTRACHET *GRAND CRU*.

In Burgundy every vineyard gives subtly different wine. Even the grapes taste different from one plot to the next. The Chevalier grapes are tiny, peeping from beneath the leaves like rare birds' eggs. Though not fully ripe, they are surprisingly sweet, with a flavor of unexpected intensity and a fresh, lingering aftertaste of real distinction. I recognize a taste often found in a mature Chevalier-Montrachet—that of tangerine. The juice from this *grand cru* grape has a flavor fuller and more complex than that of any of the grapes I tasted in *village* and *premier cru* vineyards.

Back in the spotless cellars, Vincent is in a joking mood as he pulls corks from precious bottles. "Bâtard-Montrachet"—plop!—"is a wine for serious people. For company directors, prime ministers, the queen of England. It is a public wine, a wine for banquets. Chevalier"—plop!—"is a wine for drinking with your wife or, if you prefer, with your girlfriend."

One by one we taste most of the *domaine*'s 1986 and 1985 wines. Each growth shows the same, classic traits. They quickly expand in the glass, as good wines always do, and we observe that the '86s are fairly light but extremely intense, with a long, beautifully precise aftertaste. The '85s are fuller, more concentrated, and longer-lived. They are also fat and very round. Vincent favors the younger, more elegant vintage; his nephew Olivier prefers the older, richer one.

Now the '87 Chevalier is uncorked. From an "off" vintage, it might reasonably be expected to be a letdown, but this is emphatically not the case. Lighter and shorter-lived, yes, but it gives off an aroma of exquisite purity and delicacy and has a long, intense aftertaste that is full of nuances—an entrancing wine that, for the next year or two, will give more pleasure than the superior but less developed '86 and '85.

Our tasting, like the poured wines, expands in scope. Now the legendary '83 is opened and dispensed. The color is a glowing yellow gold, with a distinct tinge of emerald. The nose is slightly smoky and has innumerable aromatic facets, with a suggestion of honey to begin with, then citronella, then peach, then a variety of tropical fruits. The flavor is full, dynamic, concentrated, and of awesome depth. Marine fossils, compressed into the soil of Puligny millions of years ago, leave a delicate hint of minerals on the sustained finish. It is a measure of this wine's greatness that, despite a high alcohol level, it is neither heady nor heavy and has enormous finesse. Still young at eight years, it is an uncut diamond of a wine that will with time acquire facets and polish.

Now the '79 Chevalier is uncorked. Fully mature, it gives off the most complete aroma of them all, filling the cellar with a soaring tracery of flowery and fruity scents. As the glass is swirled, one aroma after another presents itself: apricot, honey, white truffles, greengage, even a fugitive hint of pineapple. The majestic flavor is both unctuous and incisive, showing a delicate sweetness that is a legacy from ripe grapes picked a decade ago. The aftertaste is given "nerve" by a thread of crisp, fresh acidity, which also imparts length.

Vincent thrusts the corks back into the bottles and places one of each in the hands of all those present, rather as if presenting an award. It is time for lunch at Le Montrachet, Puligny's one-star restaurant. We stroll across the village green, happily laden with bottles, which sparkle in the sun. I find myself wondering what piece of music could possibly do justice to this sequence of the *domaine*'s greatest wines. The "Ode to Joy"? The "Hallelujah" chorus? Or is something more esoteric called for?

As we enter the restaurant, handing our bottles to a smiling sommelier, I decide that the best accompaniment is not great music, after all, but the clink of cutlery and glasses and the lively table talk of the man who makes the unforgettable wines of Domaine Leflaive. □

Frank Ward is the wine columnist of The European.

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COLLECTING

Eighteenth-century enameled English boxes

BY ANDREA DINOTO

"I bite enamel," Taylor B. Williams said at the New York Winter Antiques Show and proceeded very gently to tap a little box against his teeth, producing a sharp click. "Hear that? That's enamel." Williams, the foremost American dealer in eighteenth-century English enamel boxes, then "bit" the top of the box. The click was decidedly duller. "You see," he explained with a touch of exasperation, "the lid has been sprayed with acrylic. Not only can you feel the difference; you can hear it. This is a very common type of restoration and I find it completely unacceptable."

The unfortunate box, kept for just such an object lesson, was replaced in a showcase brimming with dozens of exquisite examples of bona fide, unrestored English enamel work. Embellished with sentiments ("A Friendly Present," "A Lover's Gift"), pastoral scenes, floral and abstract designs, nicely skewed portraits, and classical motifs, these enamels are usually found in the form of small lidded boxes. They may be square, round, oval, rectangular, or trunk-shaped, or they may be shaped like birds and dogs ("Pugs are common as dirt," says Williams), does and tigers (very rare), fruit, flowers, shoes, eggs, and more.

All are containers meant for snuff or sweets or for patches (stick-on beauty marks), in which case the box has a tiny mirror in the lid—the oldest are of polished steel. Among other small forms are étuis, scent bottles, nut-shaped nutmeg graters, potpourris with reticulated lids, imitation pocket watches, called "toys," that are really patch boxes, dunce-cap-shaped candlesnuffers, and sealing-wax containers known as bougie boxes, after the Algerian town where the wax came from. Larger enamels may be full-size tea caddies, writing boxes, and candlesticks, while among miscellaneous items are small plaques and bottle tickets—labels to hang around a bottle's neck to identify its contents.

Within the past five decades the value of English enamels has escalated at least ten times. The New Jersey dealers Barbara and Melvin Alpren remember buying their first piece—a tiny motto box—in 1941. It cost $46, a price that then seemed exorbitant to Mrs. Alpren. "I had to have it and paid a dollar a month for forty-six months." Today such boxes are still the most popular and start at about $450. Decorative boxes and figurals range from the low to the mid thousands, while rarities, regardless of size, can fetch five figures. A tiny gold-mounted scent bottle, for example, depicting entwined lovebirds, is priced at $12,000 by Taylor Williams, who explains, "There is one in the Schreiber Collection, at the V & A, and I've heard that Queen Mary owned one."

Above: Bilston King Charles spaniel patch box, ca. 1780. Right: Bilston bonbonnière in parrot form (can be painted as a fish). Left: Gold-mounted scent bottle with motto "Nothing is so sweet," ca. 1765.

ENGLISH ENAMELS COURTESY TAYLOR B. WILLIAMS ANTIQUES CHICAGO

The Schreiber Collection, at the Victoria and Albert Museum, in South Kensington, offers one of the few opportunities to see a generous assortment of eighteenth-century enamels. The collection is the bequest of Lady Charlotte Schreiber, an assiduous nineteenth-century collector of English antiques and objets d'art, who especially loved these enamel bibelots. She bought oodles of them in England and on the Continent. In order to compete with the sophisticated European enamelers, the English cultivated Continental markets in ingenious ways: by borrowing images from rococo painters like Boucher and Watteau; by emulating European floral styles (Meissen's "Deutsche Blumen," for example); by adopting elements of chinoiserie; by depicting foreign royals and aristocrats; even by developing special colors, like Rose Pompadour, which the French called English Pink.

English eighteenth-century enamels, appreciated as a distinct stylistic genre, were produced as a cottage industry from about 1740 to the 1840s. They are often erroneously called "Battersea boxes," after the district in London where such boxes were made between 1753 and 1756. Most, however, came from the south Staffordshire towns of Bilston and Wednesbury—famed for its cobalt blue motto boxes—as well as Birmingham and Liverpool.

Enameling is an ancient craft that involves the fusing of pulverized glass onto metal (in the case of these boxes, copper) by means of heat in small kilns. The technique of painting with enamels to simulate the finish on Continental porcelain was introduced to England by French artisans. Many pieces were entirely hand painted, but the English also learned to make expert use of transfer printing. This technique, used even more widely in the ceramics industry, involves the transfer of copperplate engravings to glazed surfaces. The monochrome images obtained might be left uncolored on a white ground. This style is typical of two factories: York House, Battersea, which produced boxes and plaques, some featuring allegorical scenes rendered by the French engraver Ravenet; and the Liverpool firm of Sadler and Green, which specialized in portraits of famous people and characters from the theater. More often the transfer print was overpainted to produce a highly decorative colorful design. One can usually spot the dotted engraved lines with a magnifying glass.

Enamels were never identified with makers' marks, although a few rarities carry decorators' initials. The collector therefore faces the challenge of learning to identify authentic examples purely by stylistic clues. An invaluable aid is Susan Benjamin's *English Enamel Boxes*, a scholarly illustrated history that discusses enameling techniques, styles of English makers, the spotting of fakes, and Continental examples. The author is a partner in the London shop

A collection of eighteenth-century snuffboxes, tobacco boxes, bonbonnières, plaques, bottle tickets, étuis, patch boxes, and a tea caddy.

GREEN
MADEIRA

PICTURE SOURCES: Cover: Catherine Laroche; model, Jana/Elite, L.A.; hair, Syd Curry/Visages; makeup, Agostina Lombardo/Celestine; dress, courtesy Victor Edelstein for Vera Wang Bridal House Ltd.; lily-of-the-valley headpiece, courtesy Vera Wang; shoes, courtesy Maud Frizon; gloves, courtesy Portolano. Page 7: (top left) Illustration by Teresa Fasolino; (bottom left) Frank Lloyd Wright side chair, 1902, oak, courtesy Frances McLaughlin-Gill; (center) photo, Philip Newton; stylist, Catherine Laroche; model, Jana/Elite, L.A.; hair, Syd Curry/Visages; makeup, Agostina Lombardo/Celestine; lingerie, courtesy La Perla; hoop petticoat, courtesy Sydney Bush; veil, courtesy Priscilla of Boston; diamond and ruby bracelet, courtesy Van Cleef & Arpels; stockings, courtesy Gerbe; photographed at the Regent Beverly Wilshire; (top right) photo, Tim Street-Porter; (bottom right) photo, Sally Gall; stylist, Sara Barbaris. Page 14: (top left) Ad Reinhardt, *Collage*, 1940; medium, cut and pasted papers on cardboard; size, 15¾″ x 13⅛″; Collection, the Museum of Modern Art, New York, Gift of the Artist. Page 26: Raphael Sanzio, *Saint Catherine of Alexandria*, 1483–1520; medium, tempera on panel; size, 15″ x 5″. Page 32: Henri Matisse, *Femme au Chapeau* (Woman with the Hat), 1905; medium, oil on canvas; size, 31¾″ x 23½″. Page 34: (top) Medium, oil on canvas; size, 60 cm x 80.5 cm. Page 42: Grooming, Cheryl Marks/Oribe, N.Y.C. Page 46: Photo, Ken Probst/Outline. Page 58: Antique paper screen and small Empire-style gueridon, courtesy Malmaison Antiques, New York. Page 59: (bottom, center) Mahogany side chair with modern yellow silk damask upholstery, attributed to Thomas Affleck, Philadelphia, ca. 1770; the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Purchase, Sanbury-Mills and Rogers Fund; Emily C. Chadbourne Gift, Virginia Groomes Gift, in Memory of Mary W. Groomes; Mr. and Mrs. Marshall P. Blankarn; John Bierwirth and Robert G. Goelet Gifts; the Sylamaris Collection, Gift of George Coe Graves, by Exchange; Mrs. Russell Sage, by Exchange; and funds from various donors, 1974 (1974.325); (bottom right) walnut with yellow-pine Queen Anne–style armchair, Philadelphia, 1740–60; the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1925 (25.115.36). Page 63: (bottom, center) Charles Eames side chair, model DCM, of molded ash plywood, steel rods, and rubber shock mounts; size, 28¾″ x 19½″ x 20″. Collection, the Museum of Modern Art, New York, Gift of the Herman Miller Furniture Company. Pages 70–77: Flowers, courtesy Covent Garden, Los Angeles, Calif. Page 70: (left) Tulle veil, courtesy Debra Moises; pearl earrings, courtesy Pardillo; shoes, courtesy Stuart Weitzman. Page 70 (right) and page 71: Dress, courtesy Victor Edelstein for Vera Wang Bridal House Ltd.; earrings, courtesy Chanel; gloves, courtesy Portolano; shoes, courtesy Maud Frizon. Page 72: Car, Nash Metropolitan, 1960; pearl bracelet and choker, courtesy Karl Lagerfeld Bijoux; shoes, courtesy Manolo Blahnik. Page 73: (center) Pearl earrings and ring, courtesy Cardillo; ankle boots, courtesy Stephane Kélian; (right) dress and veil, courtesy the Vera Wang made-to-order collection; pearl choker, courtesy Karl Lagerfeld Bijoux; shoes, courtesy Maud Frizon; hosiery, courtesy Calvin Klein Hosiery. Page 74: Sterling-silver earrings, courtesy Patricia Von Musulin; headband, courtesy Colette Maloue; shoes and patent-leather handbag, courtesy Prada; necklace, courtesy Claude Montana; hosiery, courtesy Hue; (bottom) earrings, courtesy Rose and Barbera; shoes, courtesy Stephane Kélian; hosiery, courtesy Gerbe. Page 74 (top right) and page 75: Emerald, diamond, and gold bracelet and earrings, courtesy Buccellati, Los Angeles; tulle wrap, courtesy Debra Moises; hosiery, courtesy Fogal. Page 79: Sigmar Polke; medium, mixed media on fabric strips; size, 126″ x 102⅜″; photo, courtesy San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution. Page 80: (top) Sigmar Polke; medium, lacquer and oil on canvas; size, 74¹³⁄₁₆″ x 55⅞″; photo, courtesy San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution; (bottom) Sigmar Polke; medium, artificial resin and acrylics on canvas; size, 86⅜″ x 118⅛″; photo, courtesy Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution. Page 81: (top) Sigmar Polke, medium, artificial resin and acrylics on various fabrics; size, 114⅜″ x 114⅜″; photo, courtesy San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; (bottom) Sigmar Polke; medium, acrylic on canvas; size, 78¾″ x 66¹⁵⁄₁₆″. Pages 82–83: Photo, Mark Hanauer/Onyx; model, Kristen S./ It; stylist, Lauren Ehrenfeld/Celestine; hair and makeup, Jeanne Townsend/Celestine; pearl tank, Michael Simon; pants, Liz Bruce; jewelry, scarf, from I. Magnin. Page 105: (top) Courtesy Simon Pierce. Page 108: (bottom) Bracelet, courtesy Private Collection, N.Y.C.; (top) necklace design, Christopher Walling and Sean Gilson

Right: Etui of painted enamel with gilt-metal clasps, mounts, and back, and red cloth leaves for needles, 1760–70.

COURTESY OF THE TRUSTEES OF THE V & A MUSEUM, LONDON

Halcyon Days, which revived the enameling craft in 1970 and sells both antique and new enamels—clearly marked replicas with a modern decorative style.

It takes a practiced eye to recognize old English examples. Look first at the metal mounts. The frame, or bezel, that holds the enamel plates should fit tightly, without gaps. There should be no beading, and the metal should have an even, naturally oxidized patina rather than encrusted black areas, which may indicate artificial aging. The thumbpiece "should have just enough lift to open it," say the Alprens. In addition, the slope-sided knuckle hinge should stand open at a right angle without flopping over. Fakes made by the Sampson firm, in Paris, from 1845 to 1975 bear a lug on the hinge that supports the lid. "These are sometimes clipped off," warns Williams, "so if a lid flops all the way over it's a fake." Sampson fakes, occasionally marked with two interlocking S's, tend to be evenly colored, while English antiques are somewhat mottled, because eighteenth-century kilns had no thermostats and firings were unpredictable. Blistering caused by overfiring sometimes occurs on the surface of antique enamels, but it is an altogether acceptable defect.

Few enamels have come down to us in perfect condition. Most dealers and collectors reject severely damaged pieces but consider hairline cracks acceptable, along with small chips that reveal the copper base. "These spots can be filled and 'in painted' by a professional restorer," says Taylor Williams, "but they can never be re-enameled, and I personally do not approve of acrylic spraying."

Although Williams generally avoids badly damaged enamels, he made an exception in the case of a very rare monkey box. He had read of a box shaped like a grinning monkey head, listed in eighteenth-century inventories, of which no examples had ever been found. To his surprise, one needing extensive restoration turned up in a Texas collection he bought. Williams videotaped the monkey before and after and sold it to a collector for quite a lot ("the high four figures"). But he remained intrigued with the scene on the bottom of the box, showing a monkey wrestling with a cat and holding its paw to the hearth fire. "A year later," he says, "I was thrilled to discover the source of the image in a Hogarth engraving illustrating Cunning triumphing over Intelligence." □

SOURCES

English Enamel Boxes, by Susan Benjamin. Orbis Publishing, London; 1978, 1982.

Dealers:

Melvin and Barbara Alpren. By appointment: 201-731-9427.

D. M. and P. Manheim Antiques Corp., 305 East Sixty-first Street, New York, NY 10021; 212-758-2986.

James Robinson, Inc., 15 East Fifty-seventh Street, New York, NY 10022; 212-752-6166.

Taylor B. Williams. By appointment: 312-266-0908.

Auctions: No specialized sales. Enamels are sometimes included in sales of English porcelains, watches, objets de vertu, and so on. Best bets: Sotheby's London (Julia Clarke); Sotheby's New York (Gerard Hill).

Andrea DiNoto writes regularly for Connoisseur *on antiques and collectibles.*

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DESIGN

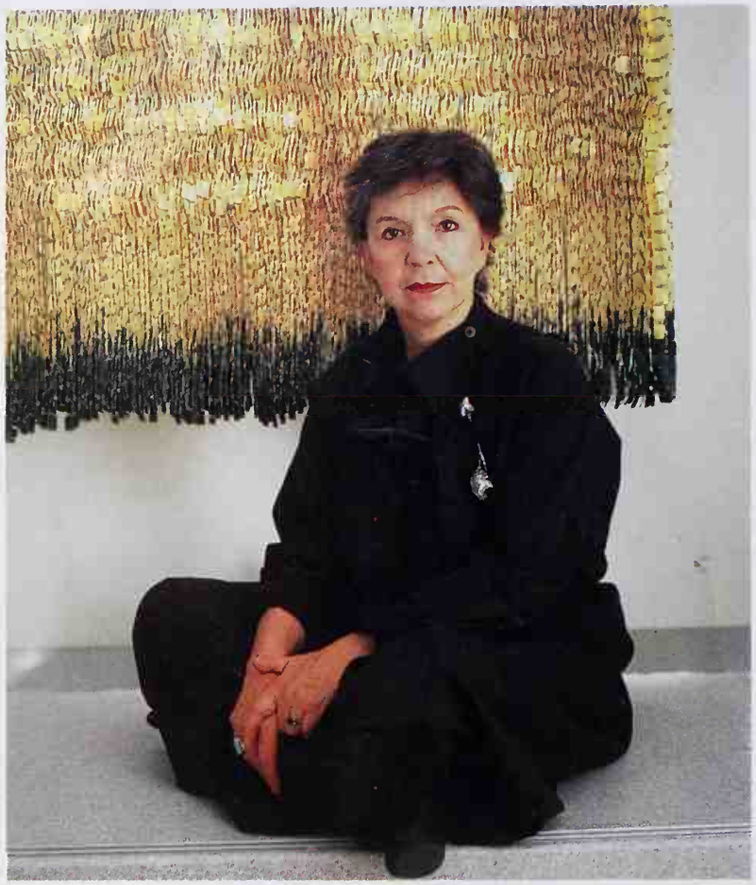
Truth in tapestries ❧ *Simplicity and function in glass*

Weaving a Life

Olga de Amaral's woven tapestries seem to breathe. Hanging on the wall, they look ceremonial, the geometric patterns at once primitive and supremely sophisticated. In their sculptural serenity, the eleven works in her recent show in Manhattan's Bellas Artes gallery created an almost sacred atmosphere. As she walked among them, dressed in black, the tiny, dark-haired artist looked like a gentle priestess.

De Amaral first studied architecture at the Collegio Mayor de Cundinamarca, in her hometown of Bogotá. In 1954, however, when she transferred to Cranbrook Academy of Art, in Michigan, textiles completely won her over. Her love of geometry, math, and physics inspired works that are modular in feel, no matter what their scale. At Cranbrook, she also met her future husband, a Californian, the painter and sculptor Jim de Amaral, and together they returned to Bogotá, where they established an atelier that creates handwoven fabric for clothing and interiors. This successful business has freed her to experiment and develop without constraints. After their son and daughter were born, they spent most of each year in Paris, a city where she was never quite at ease: too intellectual, she explains, compared to her beloved rough and austere homeland.

In 1964, the designer Jack Lenor Larsen discovered de Amaral. Although she had shown in Colombia and Venezuela, until the New York exhibition at his gallery, in 1967, she was not known internationally. Since then, there has been a solo or group show somewhere in the world almost yearly. Her works are also in public collections, including Manhattan's Metropolitan Museum of Art, Chicago's Art Institute, and Kyoto's National Museum of Modern Art. Americans have always been her most enthusiastic private collectors.



PHOTOGRAPH BY ADAM BARTOS

Olga de Amaral: "Weaving is a way of constructing your own way of life."

COURTESY BELLAS ARTES GALLERY, NEW YORK

"Weaving," de Amaral explains, "is a way of constructing your own way of life, your way of thought. It is building a life." Whether using cotton, linen, horsehair, or silk, de Amaral has worked with the same five weavers for years. "It is as if I have one hundred hands with me, and as they turn, the weaving opens like an orchid." None of her designs are preconceived but grow almost of their own accord. De Amaral has always experimented with design and color, currently moving from rich, deep shades to gold, red, and blue, which she calls "complete colors." Blue refers to transparency and her memories of the stucco walls and painted trims of Colombia's colonial towns. Red symbolizes love, as it does in the face painting of Indian women from Colombia's jungles. Gold, or the gold leaf with which she works, denotes power, pain, patriotism, mysticism—things that fiber cannot express.

Only in the past five years has de Amaral painted rather than dyed fibers and begun to use color as a painter does. They have become her canvas. Although she likes to draw, canvas seemed too abstract to her. However, a growing attachment to Santa Fe, where she and her husband have been spending their time, makes her think the peace of mind she feels there may be conducive to painting on canvas.

What has changed de Amaral's life most dramatically was the birth of her granddaughter, Valentina, two years ago. "It was as if she was an answer, a completion of a circle." Every morning when de Amaral is in Bogotá, Valentina goes into her grandmother's studio to watch her work. There she happily whiles away the time, occasionally making a suggestion about a weaving, little realizing that she is an inspiration. "I thought at her birth, This is the Truth," says de Amaral.

—VALERIE GLADSTONE

❧ *Valerie Gladstone, a freelance writer based in New York, often writes about the arts.*

Made in Vermont by Way of Ireland

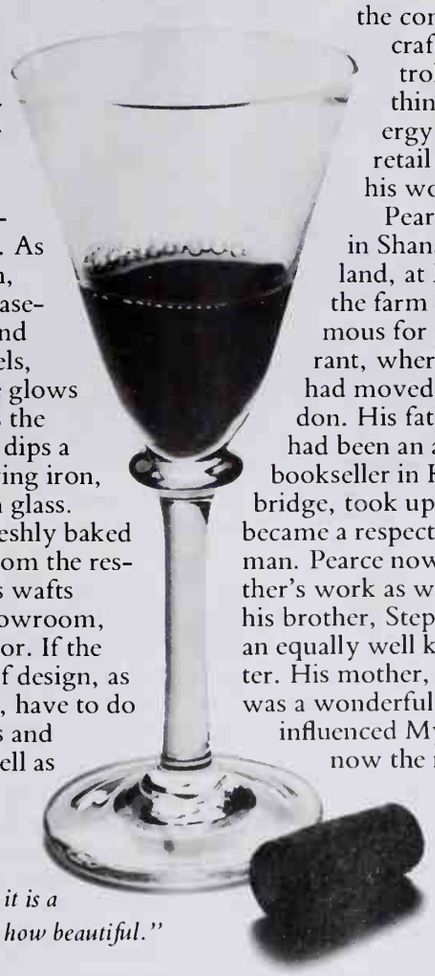
"For me, the great quality of glass is that you can see through it," Simon Pearce is saying as he explains why he works exclusively in clear leaded crystal. "When you put things in it, it comes alive—wine in a glass, fruit in a bowl." He has offered me a drink of cold water in one of his sturdy, hand-blown goblets, and as I set it down on a low ash table sunlight cascades in through the window. The water and crystal seem to catch fire.

The goblet, with its bucket-shaped bowl, smooth baluster, and broad foot, appears solid enough to clink in a barroom toast, elegant enough for a

banquet table. "The ideas at the core of my work," says Pearce, "are simplicity and function. A wineglass, no matter how beautiful, that breaks if you put a tea towel in it is a failure. The real proof of good design is how it lasts."

On this late-winter morning, Pearce, a robust-looking, red-haired Englishman in his midforties, seems not merely a craftsman and designer but a magus, presiding over an enchanted realm of fire and ice. Beyond the window of his large, uncluttered office and workroom, located on the top floor of the old flannel mill he restored nine years ago in the tiny village of Quechee, Vermont, is a glittering panorama. The Ottauquechee River is thundering past snowy banks toward a small covered bridge. It drops suddenly, flooding over a rocky dam, freezing gradually into Gustave Doré whorls and pinnacles. The roaring current powers a Westinghouse turbine that drives the fiery furnace in the basement of the old factory, where a team of glassblowers is at work.

As the turbine throbs, the whole building hums, and every element in this impossibly picturesque scene appears deliberately chosen and perfectly arranged. As visitors look on, potters in the basement studio bend over their wheels, and the furnace glows red-gold across the way as a gaffer dips a punty, or blowing iron, into the molten glass. The smell of freshly baked brown bread from the restaurant upstairs wafts through the showroom, on the main floor. If the ultimate tests of design, as Pearce believes, have to do with usefulness and durability as well as beauty, then this factory, in its setting that is both aesthetically pleasing and practical, is as much a testament to his taste as his glassware is.



CHUCK KINTZING, COURTESY SIMON PEARCE

"A wineglass that breaks if you put a tea towel in it is a failure, no matter how beautiful."

Pearce first came to Vermont, he says, in search of a power source as well as a beautiful place in which to live and work. He had operated a successful workshop in County Kilkenny, Ireland, but the energy crisis that swept Europe as well as America during the mid-1970s made it difficult for him to keep his 3,000-degree furnace in constant operation. He began to think about a trip he had made to America a few years earlier, particularly about what he had seen in New England: all those abandoned dams and mills, relics of an earlier economy. Pearce's dream was to become the compleat craftsman, controlling everything from energy source to retail display of his work.

Simon Pearce shapes a crystal glass in his Vermont factory.

Pearce grew up in Shanagarry, Ireland, at Ballymaloe, the farm now famous for its restaurant, where his family had moved from London. His father, who had been an antiquarian bookseller in Knightsbridge, took up pottery and became a respected craftsman. Pearce now sells his father's work as well as that of his brother, Stephen, who is an equally well known potter. His mother, says Pearce, was a wonderful cook, who influenced Myrtle Allen, now the renowned doyenne of Ballymaloe House. His mother's recipe for brown bread is still used there as well as in his own restaurant.

"We never had very much, growing up," says Pearce, "but everything around us was usually simple but beautiful. Design and quality were not pushed—they were just always there."

When Pearce came to Vermont in 1982, he brought with him three Irish glassblowers and a European sensibility toward glassmaking, which actually had little in common with the burgeoning American notion of craftsmanship as back-to-the-land idealism. For Pearce, craft meant a long apprenticeship under exacting masters and a well-produced object. "All I care about," he says flatly, "is the end product. The fact that it's handmade is not an advantage in itself. We don't do it by hand just to say it's handmade. I'd use robots if I could get the same effect." Yet it is the very imperfection of handmade glass, says Pearce, that makes it beautiful. "When you do your best, it's still not perfect—it has that individuality and character, and that's what I love about it. As soon as you go to a machine it loses all that."

Glassblowing, Pearce discovered early on, is an arduous, rather secretive trade, its traditions guarded jealously since the Romans first perfected the craft, in the first century A.D. He worked in leading European workshops and factories, including Leerdam, in Holland, Kastrup Holmegaard, in Denmark, and Orrefors and Boda, in Sweden. Although he found that the Italian masters in Murano were the most skillful craftsmen, with "an incredible understanding of the material," he was more strongly influenced, he says, by what he felt was the purity and simplicity of Scandinavian design.

He was influenced, too, by the early drinking glasses used in taverns, particularly the goblets and tankards used in English and Irish pubs in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. "Scandinavian design," he says, "can get too clinical. I love the Irish feel of things. It's not so hard-edged. On the whole, I aim for a clean look and feeling, with a softness that Scandinavian glass lacks."

The simplicity and sturdiness of Pearce's work also suggest the quality of early colonial objects. His sensibility seems to fit quite comfortably into New England, with its traditions of self-sufficiency, practicality, and individuality. "In New England," he says, "people who came here first built beautiful houses and beautiful tools. The things they made to use in their lives were beautiful. You find that feeling and quality in early glass and pottery."

One could imagine, when picking up one of Pearce's bowls, pitchers, or glasses, finding beside his trademark—the rough cross made by the pontil iron—a label: "Made in Vermont by way of Ireland." *(Simon Pearce also has shops in Westport, Connecticut, and New York City.)* —CAROL FLAKE

Carol Flake is the author of Thoroughbred Kingdoms.

STYLE

Christopher Walling's jewels are a badge of honor among artful women

BY AMY FINE COLLINS

If the eighties were the glitz decade, the nineties, we are told, will be an era of quiet good taste. The signs are already with us. In Manhattan, upscale restaurants are slashing their prices or closing; fashion is becoming less ornate; our brashest billionaires have been humbled. Following last summer's theft of $40,000 worth of Georgette Mosbacher's jewels by an Uzi-toting maniac, the *New York Times* reported, from the nouvelle society front, ". . . women made an effort to dress down in public. . . . Who dared risk being photographed . . . wearing an extra diamond?"

For women whose sense of style does not depend on an extra diamond, Christopher Walling has lately become the jeweler of choice. "I wear very little jewelry," says his client the art dealer Virginia Zabriskie, "—just Chris's and my Timex." Carolyn Alexander, of the Brooke Alexander gallery, says, "Before I saw Christopher's work I never really wore jewelry."

It is no coincidence that Walling's most ardent patrons are members of the art world. For both him and his customers, design takes precedence over mineralogy. Laila Twigg-Smith, a collector who with her husband founded the Contemporary Museum in Honolulu, compares purchasing Walling's work to acquiring art: "They're both propelled by the same instincts." Especially since his trademark stone is the nearly extinct baroque pearl, there is a similar investment potential. (Ten years ago he was able to sell a Tahitian natural-color black-pearl necklace for $5,000; today, the minimum price has doubled.) But Walling did not choose the baroque pearl for its scarcity. Whether knuckle-size and strung as a necklace, floating around a 165-carat citrine in a brooch, or wrapped in a trellis of rubies and diamonds, baroque pearls appeal to him for their "chameleonesque" qualities: "They pick up surrounding colors—of a woman's complexion or her clothes. They can look either glamorous or tailored, but never flashy." Reflecting the same spirit, Walling's favorite diamond shape, which he likes to use in rings, is the distinctly understated, and underused, rose cut, or antique cushion.

Walling's "unostentatious" (to quote Alex Katz's wife, Ada) approach to jewelry making can perhaps be accounted for by his unusual family background: "They gave me intellectual and social standards to live up to"—an imperative to "do something with my life." His great-great grandfather William H. English, an Indiana robber baron, ran for vice-president in 1880. His grandfather William English Walling was a "millionaire socialist," who cofounded the NAACP and secretly met in Amsterdam in 1936 with anti-Nazi activists in an attempt to halt Hitler. His grandmother the socialist Anna Strunsky kept up a correspondence with Jack London, which was published as a book in 1903. His father was involved with the United Nations in its early days. Then there is the legacy of his French mother, a Resistance fighter, who was in a concentration camp for a year.

Naturally, Walling, a tall, lean man of forty-one, with a dark thicket of hair and a friendly, chatty manner, studied political science, until he finally woke up to the fact that a career in the family tradition was not his true calling: "Everyone but me always understood that I would be a jewelry designer." The signs were there from the time he was eight, when a National Geographic book, *Everyday Life in Ancient Times*, sparked a fascination with archaeolo-

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ELIZABETH ZESCHIN, STYLIST, KIM FREEMAN

Left: "Paisley" earrings. Above, clockwise: Two-strand black-pearl necklace and earrings; X pearl earrings; gold necklace, earrings; necklace of gem-studded gray pearls.

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gy. "I read about buried treasure and wanted to excavate it. So I started making my own treasures. I chose jewelry because it seemed to be what lasted. My first efforts were Minoan-style necklaces fashioned from copper telephone wire." He also used to show guests his mother's jewelry—mostly nineteenth-century French pieces.

Yet it was his father who, in a practical sense, set his feet on the jewelry-making path: "Because he had learned about it in boarding school, he had the knowledge and the tools." His family also had an artsy streak. After studying at the Ecole des Beaux Arts, his father had a late-life second career as an architect. Arshile Gorky was a family friend, and when Christopher was thirteen, he acquired a Mary Frank plaster bas-relief of a nude. While Walling lived in West Africa during his father's UN years, his parents collected tribal masks. But his father "stripped off the masks' feathers, stones, and shells" to make them consistent with his taste for pure, streamlined form. As a young adult, Walling found himself irresistibly drawn to minimalist art, whose influence can be seen in his fundamental shapes and uniform colorations. He names Dan Flavin, Robert Wilson, James Turrell, and Joel Shapiro among his artist heroes. (Shapiro has returned the homage by trading art for earrings, rings, and a necklace for his daughter and wife.) Among old masters, Walling admires Sassetta.

Walling's sensibility reminds the art dealer Holly Solomon of Sol LeWitt: "He keeps working on the same thing over and over." However, Walling says he never repeats the really important pieces: "Repeating is not usually possible, because of the stones' scarcity. I make a limited edition of three to five pieces only if stones are available." What prompted Solomon's observation are Walling's signature design, the X-shaped Biwa-pearl earrings, the simplest of which cost $2,000 to $3,000. Laila Twigg-Smith bought hers—the first of many Walling acquisitions—right off Solomon's ears. The sugary-toned, free-form Xes, which Walling rims in gold, are cultured in the mollusk, once an X-shaped nucleus has been implanted. "Some of the earliest cultured pearls," he reminds us, "were Buddha-shaped, grown by placing miniature statuettes in the oysters." The X was a "baroque form that was out there, but no one else took advantage of it." On further reflection, he adds, "Perhaps I was attracted to them because the X sign is Russian and Greek for the start of my name. My father always called me 'Xtopher.' " The X appeals to him aesthetically as well as linguistically: "As a shape, it is surprisingly complimentary to the face. Like all baroque pearls, the Xes are irregular—as is the face." While symmetrical shapes can call unwanted attention to physiognomic imperfections, lumpier, more organic forms harmonize with any subtle asymmetries. "They sort of climb right up the earlobe," Walling explains.

An assortment of Xes (earrings and bracelet) and a necklace.

Eleven-strand pearl necklace with diamond doughnut

Lily Auchincloss, a Museum of Modern Art board member, probably launched the demand for the X earrings. "Lily turns heads wherever she goes," says Walling admiringly. "A number of women at the museum have them now," says Auchincloss, "and I wear mine almost every day. But I was first on board." *House & Garden*'s editor-in-chief, Nancy Novogrod, is another elegant woman often spotted in the simple but flattering Xes. (She also owns a strand of the black Tahitian and of the white South Seas pearls, which are the second-most-desired Walling pieces, and matching black and white rings.) "The Xes have become almost a badge, as if you're a member of a club," she reflects. "I met Christophe de Menil because of them. She stopped me in my daughter's nursery school to admire them. And when I went to visit one of my best friends recently in Pennsylvania, there was her mother wearing Christopher's earrings." Perhaps Liz Taylor is the most celebrated owner of the X pearls; they were a gift from her daughter Liza Todd.

Walling has expanded his X repertoire to include pavé-diamond versions, which convert to dress clips (up to $26,000), pearl ones with chrome tourmaline accents (about $6,000—he is a fan of semiprecious stones because he likes their edible-looking, Jell-O-like shades), and still others crisscrossed in pavé. For a touch more drama, customers can add black Tahitian-pearl drops, attached to the X by means of a barely visible mechanism. Walling is not thrilled when these designs of his are compared to those of others. "It's unfortunate," he says, "not only that prestigious stores may encourage their name designers to imitate the work of independent designers like me, but that they cut corners on production and the results look cheap." Design is getting more and more uniform, he laments. "The best foreign cars now look like Dodges. Jewelers all imitate one another. Women require a sense of security to wear something individual."

At Fifth Avenue's great jewelry stores, Walling estimates, the customer is also paying a great deal extra for the cachet of the brand names. And no one is paying very close attention to what works best on a customer. He cites his favorite jeweler, the late French designer Suzanne Belperron, who "found it unfathomable that someone would buy a dress off the rack if she could afford couture. She spent days with a client to find out what her life was like, what

her wrists and neck were like." He also admires Joel Rosenthal, of J.A.R., in Paris, who "doesn't hesitate to tell a client that the colors she's wearing are all wrong or that he won't make her a gold chain."

People who come to Walling, he says, have to trust his eye: "I've been looking at jewelry constantly since I was a child. I even dream about it." Consequently, a fair-haired client like Carolyn Alexander will end up with a necklace in pinkish rhodochrosite or aquamarine earrings bound in gold, while Ada Katz will walk away with a two-strand gray Biwa-pearl necklace to play up her dark beauty. (Walling traded the necklace for a cutout, stand-up portrait of himself by her husband, Alex.) "The jewelry obviously works on me," Alexander remarks, "because people *always* comment. He really understands a woman's style." Walling laughs, "At times I've practically had to bludgeon people into telling them they look good."

Walling believes his finest work results when he is given carte blanche: "Two of the best pieces I ever made were for Asher Edelman [the arbitrageur]. For his first commission he brought a check and simply said, 'Make something beautiful.' " Of course, a client must be willing to wait three to six months for her gorgeous little gewgaw. He cautions impatient patrons, "It's like making love; one doesn't want it to end too soon." He also risks producing works on speculation, for his own pleasure. "It's probably a bad habit," he admits.

Currently, the most magnificent item he has in stock is a pair of "paisley" earrings wrought from two Venezuelan abalone pearls, iridescent as spilled oil and surrounded by a zigzag of baguette diamonds and pavé emeralds, so finely set they almost seem embroidered. Surprisingly, these earrings were inspired by the solid-color aesthetic of minimalism and the German baroque masterpieces of Johann Melchior Dinglinger, who worked for Augustus the Strong, perhaps history's most lavish patron of the jeweler's art. "The idea for the emerald settings came from the channel-set and pavé-emerald 'scales' on the dragon in Dinglinger's cup depicting Hercules and the Nemean lion." Other temptations in inventory include a necklace combining diamonds, plump carved emeralds and sapphires, and ringed black pearls—as sleek as ball bearings and about to become unavailable. (The pearls' rings, which resemble the circular grooves on wheel-thrown pottery, were considered flaws, and growers recently learned how to prevent them.) Equally sumptuous is a gray Tahitian-pearl necklace, studded with tsavorites and diamonds, which looks like a string of celestial globes. If these creations seem otherworldly, maybe it is because ideas come to Walling "in flashes while meditating." Images of jewelry appear to him in his dreams as well, though "translating them into realistic, three-dimensional objects can be difficult."

Walling's latest project is a new showroom, at 608 Fifth Avenue, which functions like a theater for his wares. Modeled on Lincoln Kirstein's house, it features gilt ceilings, walls draped in coppery fabric, Empire furniture, and sculptures of hands and heads resting on fluted columns. Here, one at a time, his inventions are displayed to clients. This marks quite a departure from his previous setup, which involved his ushering customers into the bathroom to admire themselves in the medicine-chest mirror. Walling expects further changes in the near future. "Because of the diminishing supply of freshwater baroque pearls, I'll be working more with precious metals." His pearl-adorned followers will have no problem making the transition with him. "I just don't have an eye for anyone else's jewelry," says Carolyn Alexander, and Laila Twigg-Smith agrees: "We've all gotten spoiled by Christopher." □

Amy Collins wrote about Jean Schlumberger for the July 1990 issue of Connoisseur.

The Vatican Gardens

(Continued from page 57)

church, source of salvation. For lesser folk, this merry fountain is simply a delight to children of all ages.

Then there is the Shell Fountain, a restrained bow to the baroque. Carved from creamy travertine, the huge shell is set into a steep, grassy slope adjacent to the papal railroad station. A central jet ripples the surface, pushing the water gently against the surrounding green lawn. Four arabesque beds, edged with box, frame the shell, a shape beloved by baroque artists for its irregularities. The shell symbolism may refer to Venus, who was born from a shell, or to Saint James and his pilgrim followers.

Appealing as all the parts of the Vatican gardens are, the whole is even more impressive. The visitor never forgets that they have always been dedicated to the leisure and meditation of the pope and served as a place of escape from the formality of the papal court and the severity of the Vatican Palace. One can picture the gold and red papal carriage rolling down the shaded allées to a meeting with prelates; or imagine a pope riding his white mule along the quiet paths, enjoying a quarter hour of solitude and peace.

The great gardens, with all their nooks and crannies, tend to be empty these days—though John Paul II walks in the park for exercise when his busy schedule permits. The stillness, while slightly surreal, lends the gardens an air of immanence. One is conscious, too, of history, of foibles, of the constant decisions and revisions that in the long run seem not compromises but the very definition of human wisdom. □

How to Visit the Gardens

Guided tours are available from March to October on Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday mornings at ten o'clock, last about two hours, and cost $10 per person. Guides are multilingual, but each day the tour is officially offered in a different major language. Once a day, a bus holding thirty-three people takes visitors to sites within the gardens. For tickets, apply a day or two in advance at the Vatican Information Office, to the left of St. Peter's Basilica, next to the Vatican Post Office. The office is open from 8:30 A.M. to 6:00 P.M., Monday through Saturday. All visitors must have official identification and be properly dressed.

Gertrude Grace Sill is an art historian at Fairfield University.

THE 23 BEST CHAIRS

(Continued from page 63)

Fehlbaum's many choices for the greatest twentieth-century classics, Reitveld's Red/Blue chair is one. Another is Alvar Aalto's "Chair 41." The Finnish architect admired the Wassily chair but ended up using Breuer's principles in a laminated-birch form instead of steel, with a double-curved plywood seat conforming to the slope of the body. Called the "scroll" chair, Chair 41 was designed between 1930 and 1933 for the Paimio Sanatorium. "Aalto, impressed by the functional forms of the Bauhaus," says Fehlbaum, "married modernity and humanity in this design."

18. Fehlbaum also admires the American designer George Nelson, for his social conscience and wit. As design director of Herman Miller, Inc., after 1946, Nelson invented the storage wall. "The aim of the design process," he wrote, "is always to produce an object that *does something*. . . . A chair has to support a body." In 1956 he designed the "marshmallow" sofa, with staggered rows of round, brown vinyl cushions for seat and back—"a résumé of George Nelson's wit," says Fehlbaum. "As a technical innovation it derives from the systems idea, but it is also great fun and decorative."

19. It was Nelson who introduced the architect Charles Eames to Herman Miller. The 1946 chair called the "Eames" chair, of molded plywood, steel rods, and rubber shock mounts, probably drew more attention to American design than any other (though Eames has won much praise for his biomorphic, all-wood "LCW" side chair and his "chaise," a two-seater in molded plastic over hard rubber). With a seat and back in compound curves formed in a modified hydraulic press, it derives from experiments by Eames and Eero Saarinen in 1939–1940. Its beauty is in its bare essentials and echo of tractor seats.

20. While many designers aimed for mass production, some, like the Italian Gaetano Pesce, preferred to design for the few. Among the chairs in his "UP" series is a comfortably enveloping form from 1969 in fabric-covered flexible polyurethane, called "#5" or "Donna." Its ballooning red shape suggests a woman's bosom and hips, while the seat between is her lap, or womb. "The ultimate woman," says Fehlbaum.

21. Frank Gehry, who designed the Vitra museum, has done chairs too. His attitude to innovation is seen in his corrugated-cardboard chair (1970), which has lasted beyond all expectations. The sandwiched layers form a base of curvaceous compressed scrolls and a canted back that is a straight rectangle. "For all the blatant humbleness of the material," says David McFadden, "the chairs present a strong, elegant sculptural form."

22. The Philadelphia offices of Robert Venturi, the reigning architect of postmodernism, offer house room to a collection of seventy-odd chairs from the eighteenth century on. "My own work is a manifestation of my admiration of historical styles," says Venturi. He "drools" over a nineteenth-century Baltimore Sheraton chair with feathers painted in its oval back in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Venturi designed furniture of his own in 1984, adapting historical styles to industrial processes, inspired by Aalto's technique with laminated plywood. His "Chippendale" chair has become a part of pop culture. Like a stencil pattern, the chair back is a cutout of the classic form, but seen from the side the line is exiguous, since the chair lacks three-dimensional molding. Vincent Scully calls the style "Chippendale signage with the complexity of twentieth-century aesthetics."

23. After the experts made their selections from the last three centuries, several paused and said, "But, of course, there is the 'Barcelona' chair." So special does Mies van der Rohe's design for the 1929 Barcelona Pavilion seem to be that it defies categories. "People think of it as contemporary because it still looks new today," says Dietz. There were only two of these chairs in the pavilion. The base, of chrome-plated steel bars in modified X shapes, was joined by crossbars and covered with a web of leather straps supporting leather-covered cushions. They were intended for a visit of the king and queen of Spain and are in a sense modern thrones as majestic as any of ancient Egypt, yet they are at ease in the lobbies of almost every important modernist building in America. "It is not just, as some would say, the greatest chair of the twentieth century," says Vincent Scully; "it is the great Platonic image of chair itself." Another critic simply calls it "the ideal piece of furniture constructed of the ideal materials in the ideal way." □

Paula Deitz, co-editor of the Hudson Review, *writes on the decorative arts.*

THE USUMACINTA

(Continued from page 69)

of war; yet as we rafted to Piedras Negras, only the occasional puff of smoke from an unseen campfire suggested the presence of any guerrillas. The only annoyance of the trip came when a man called out from the riverbank, offering a jaguar skin for sale.

Piedras Negras is quite extensive, almost as large as Yaxchilán, but it has not been excavated since 1938, when a team from the University of Pennsylvania came here for one season of study and a great deal of the sort of souvenir collecting that has since become not only frowned upon but illegal. The site gets its modern name (the Maya name being lost to time) from the huge black volcanic rocks at the entrance by the river's edge, one of them adorned with a large, round incised glyph. In Sam's opinion, the glyph was not a signpost to river travelers, as we might have thought, but was more likely intended as a greeting to the rising sun.

We arrived late in the afternoon, and a light mist was falling, but we hiked up to the site at once, wending our way through the vines and thickets that have completely overtaken it. Moss and ferns rose like little mountains over heaps of fallen masonry. In the central plaza we found the rusted remains of a tractor, abandoned by the Penn expedition. In the greenish, slanting light, off to one side, obscured by a growth of young trees, rose a particularly large heap, once a principal monument of the city: an enigmatic, leering mask, ten feet high, of a *chac,* or rain god. And in front of the mask was a broken stela, its edges rimmed with mossy hieroglyphs.

Sam whipped out windblown stacks of scholarly Xerox copies and began translating. The date was from sometime in the seventh century, he told us, when the city was at its greatest, competing with Palenque and Yaxchilán for tribute and power. He could not be more precise, because the stela was broken in the middle of the date. It had been erected to celebrate the dedication of a building, though most likely not the large structure behind it; the *chac* indicated that that building was probably of a much earlier date.

As Sam spoke, a rich, romantic aura of adventure gathered in the jungle air. When he finished, he pushed his spectacles up on his nose and said huskily,

"Well, I don't know about you guys, but I found what I came looking for." No one answered. We all knew what he was talking about, and it was not the shattered stela. That, no doubt, was written up in full in the report of the Penn expedition. What Sam meant was that for one brief moment he knew how Howard Carter and Heinrich Schliemann had felt: we belonged here, and that stela was *ours*.

We had had an adventure. □

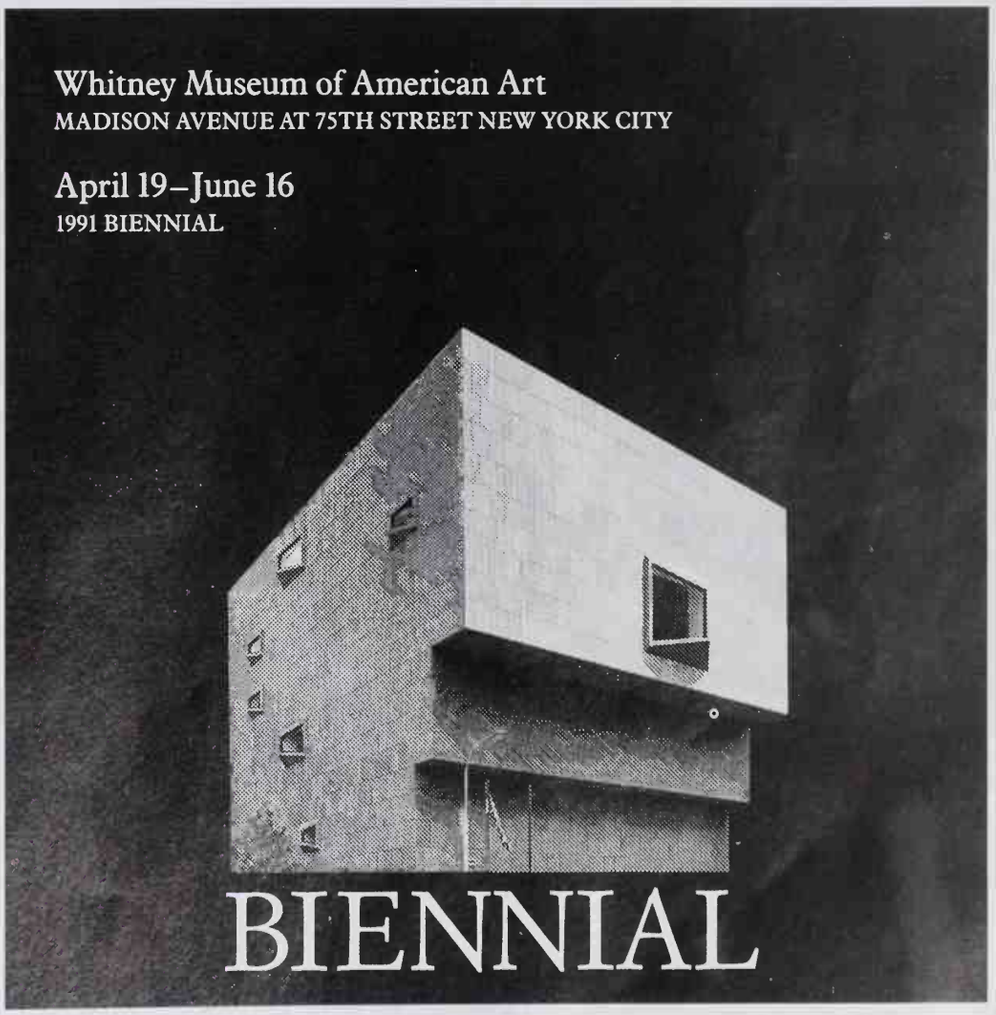
How to Do It

You need not be a member of an organized group, as I was, in order to have an adventure like mine. The Nantahala Outdoor Center offers the trip, to which it gives the colorful name "River of Ruins," four times a year, from early January through the end of March. Apply well in advance; there are always more prospective paddlers than seats on the rafts. The mailing address is 41 U.S. Highway 19 West, Bryson City, NC 28713. Other wilderness companies: Sobek Expeditions (P.O. Box 1089, Angels Camp, CA 95222) and Overseas Adventure Travel (349 Broadway, Cambridge, MA 02139).

If you want to learn more than the minimum about Maya civilization, do some homework. Two good books are *A Guide to Ancient Maya Ruins,* by C. Bruce Hunter (University of Oklahoma Press), and *A Forest of Kings,* by Linda Schele and David Freidel (William Morrow). You also might pack photocopies of pertinent pages from *The Blood of Kings,* by Linda Schele and Mary Ellen Miller (George Braziller), a readable, beautifully illustrated, and shocking survey of recent advances in Maya scholarship.

Nantahala provides most of the necessities. Campers bring only their personal gear, including bedrolls and tents (the latter may be rented from Nantahala at the rate of five dollars a day). Pack light. After two days on the river, everything in your duffel will be wet and grungy anyway. Days are warm, up to near ninety degrees; nights can cool down to the fifties. Bring nothing you would be heartbroken to lose. Do bring sun block: the gringo's best friend even in wintertime, it is almost impossible to find in Mexico. You will also want to bring insect repellent, but resist the pitch from your local camping-supplies-store salesman for DEET, the new wonder chemical that kills bugs but also melted my plastic wristwatch. Smelly old Cutter is still best. —J. J.

Jamie James is writing a book about music and science.



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ever designed. With high necks and long, pointed sleeves, they were long enough to form a pool on the floor, with a graceful train flowing behind.

The wedding dress we know today, with sheer-lace yoke or showing skin, predominantly lace bodice and sleeves, and convertible skirt with train, is very like the 1940s wedding dress. The 1940s also contributed such necklines as the sweetheart, boat, and off-the-shoulder. This look, with ever widening skirt, continued well into the 1950s, when satin began to give way to stiffer fabrics—taffeta, faille, organdy.

The most demure wedding gowns of this century were, strange to say, those worn at the end of the 1960s and early 1970s. Of stiff, opaque fabrics, these dresses featured an almost childish silhouette, with high waistline or none, puffed sleeves, and occasional eyelet embroidery or small, sweet ruffles.

The counterculture had two effects on wedding attire: one was the idea of wearing peasant blouses, Mexican wedding dresses, or antique clothing. Eventually the wearing of antique wedding dresses moved into the mainstream. The other effect was the commercialization of the idea of men's dressing more individually, which resulted in lamentable raspberry and sky blue formal suits and ruffled shirts. The 1980s taste for romantic, opulent dresses was firmly established in July of 1981 with the celebration of the marriage of the prince and princess of Wales.

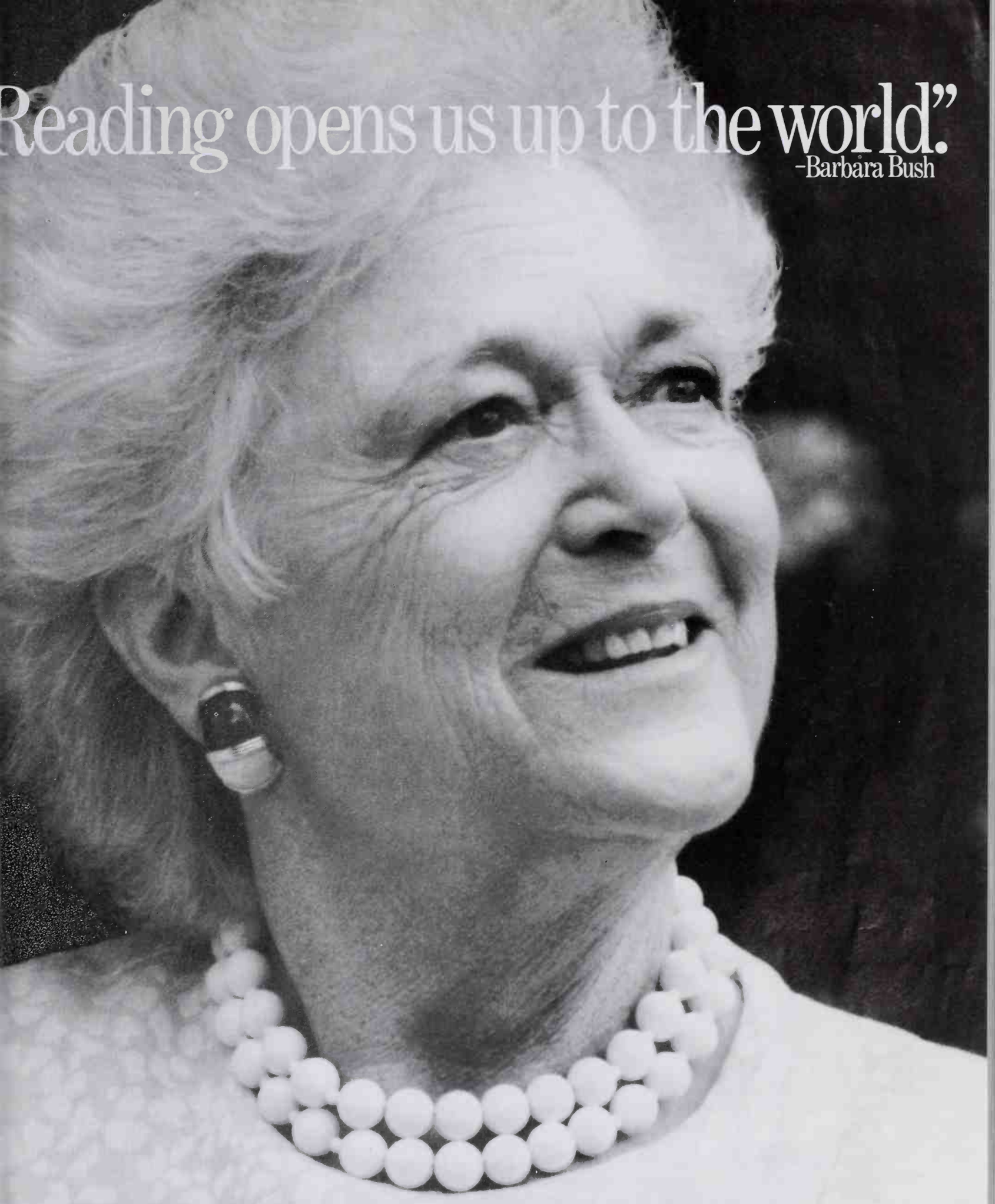
The wedding veil has a history of its own. It came into fashion as part of the Greek and Roman revival during the Napoleonic period. At first short and small, veils grew as the century progressed. Always desirable, but rarely affordable, was a wedding veil of handmade lace, usually rather narrow and not particularly long, which was handed down from one generation to the next. The alternative was snowy white tulle or bridal illusion that enveloped the bride like a cloud of smoke. The way veils are fastened on has often mirrored the fashion in hats. During the 1910s and 1920s, when toques and cloches were worn low on the brow, veils were attached with eyebrow-obscuring floral bandeaux. By the 1930s, floral or lace or bead-embroidered silk headpieces began to take the form of tiaras.

Hats, rather than veils, have tended to be the lot of bridesmaids, emphasizing the awkward nature of their ensembles, which belong to neither daytime nor evening. Etiquette books suggest that brides have always gotten to select the bridesmaids' dresses and that bridesmaids have always grumbled about them. The only recent improvement has been that dyed-to-match accessories are now usually confined to pumps instead of the parasols, fans, hats, gloves, and stockings once required. A thoughtful southern custom dating from the first decade of the century, when everyone wore the lace-trimmed lawn or linen dresses now known as Edwardian whites, had the bride supplying the bridesmaids with sashes in their favorite colors.

It is remarkable that brides continue to wear white, considering that virtually no other custom of the etiquette of dress is any longer observed. And it is curious that the 1960s, during which the very last vestiges of the old order of dress disappeared, have actually served as a catalyst to reinvigorate bridal customs by setting a precedent for personalized ceremonies. But brides' dresses tend to be personalized only in terms of style, almost never in terms of color. Even second- and third-time-around brides today wear white.

Since the image of the white dress was potent enough to survive the sexual revolution, which of course obliterated its pertinence, it must be true that it is not what the white wedding dress symbolizes so much as it is what it looks like that acts as a siren call to engaged women out bridal-gown shopping. And what it looks like is one of the most consistent and persistent female images we have, thanks to photographs, films, television, and now, wedding videos. So widely has the image of the white wedding dress been broadcast that the entire world, not just the European culture that created it, has adopted it for wedding rituals. Before the advent of photography, the bride and the wedding were rarely depicted in art. We owe the prevalence of the white wedding dress to the fact that it is photogenic. In light, surrounded by bridesmaids in pastels and men in cutaways, the bride is the cynosure of all eyes. □

Caroline Milbank is the author of Couture *and* New York Fashion.



Magazines make things happen

Magazine Publishers of America and the American Society of Magazine Editors celebrate the 250th anniversary of magazines in America.

(Continued from page 76)

strand is well known for decorating cakes with "lace" made to match the lace on the bride's gown.) She set a translucent white rose, made of sugar-and-tragacanth dough called gum pastillage, on top of the cake. Then she stood back and frowned. "I don't like that rose," she said. Actually, the rose was perfect. I could see why an especially demanding bride had once flown Van Norstrand out to Chicago to do her cake.

Like all cakes, wedding cakes may be decorated with a variety of substances. Some of the most important are pulled sugar, which produces hard, satiny decorations with great gloss; piped buttercream; and gum pastillage, which can be rolled out petal thin. Where Betty Van Norstrand works with all these techniques, Sylvia Weinstock of Manhattan has made her name from her gum-pastillage flowers. Her beautifully lifelike blossoms have graced some very *haute* wedding cakes, including the ones at the Tisch-Steinberg and Bass-Kellogg weddings. On one memorably nerve-racking weekend she made cakes for a senator and her own daughter. Who got the better cake? "The customer."

On the day I visited her TriBeCa studio, she and her three assistants were covering a ninety-egg-yolk apricot-mousse cake with lilies, irises, roses, tulips, cymbidium orchids, amaryllises, and freesias. It looked like a Renaissance still life. On shelves above the work area were stacks and stacks of plastic boxes containing a greenhouse's worth of flowers in every imaginable shade. All the flowers were edible—I got to try a broken orchid petal—but eating the flowers on a Weinstock cake is not really the point. The edible bouquet she made for her daughter's wedding is now hanging on a wall in Weinstock's office. I felt as though it should be under glass.

In Dallas, people who want flowers on their cakes go to Ida Mae's Cakes of Distinction. (In Hollywood, too: Victoria Principal had an Ida Mae cake.) Besides flowers, they get major structural engineering. And Ida Mae's clients are going to *need* major structural engineering.

"The floor-to-ceiling cake was constructed around a Maypole and surrounded by 14 smaller satellite cakes, each suspended by invisible wires at different levels to look as if they had been strung up by ribbons," one Dallas newspaper reported about a recent Ida Mae cake that served 1,500. Another cake was topped by a flower-filled gum-pastillage basket that was five feet wide and five feet high. A third consisted of "14 cakes, shaped like lily pads, sitting on a 10-foot mirrored table. They were surrounded by frogs, dragonflies, water lilies and flowers made out of sugar. Life-size sugar swans with intertwined necks rounded out the scene."

When you are delivering a wedding cake that comes with life-size swans, transportation is a big issue. Some Ida Mae cakes are shipped in moving vans. Other wedding-cake decorators are forced to be even more innovative. Cile Bellefleur-Burbidge, an acclaimed decorator based in Danvers, Massachusetts, who has created cakes for a Nigerian prince and the king of Portugal, once oversaw the delivery of a cake that went from Logan Airport to Bogotá, Colombia.

The cake, which was fortunately small, traveled in the client's carryon bag, affixed to its container with one of those spiky wire "frogs" used to hold flowers in floral arrangements. In Colombia the cake was transferred to a smaller plane and flown to a bus stop, where it and the client took a bus for several hours until they reached the hills of Bogotá, at which point the client climbed out of the bus and onto a horse. Does it spoil the story to add that the cake got there safely? Wedding cakes that do *not* get there safely are, of course, any pastry chef's nightmare.

One of the most harrowing losses was suffered by Rose Levy Beranbaum, the preternaturally talented author of *The Cake Bible*. As she describes it in her book, the cake was a present for her brother, whose wedding was to be held in San Francisco. Unfortunately, a huge blizzard began on the day of the flight and forced Beranbaum to spend the night in the terminal. The next morning she asked an airline manager about reclaiming the cake. "He looked at me in a puzzled way," she writes, "and said: 'There is no more cake.' When he smiled, I thought he was teasing me. 'Well, what happened to the cake?' I asked, pretending to go along with the ill-fated joke. 'Oh, we ate the cake,' he explained with imperturbable calm."

Of course, every small town has its wedding-cake baker. For publicity, many of them turn to a home-baking magazine called *Mailbox News*. One such woman wrote: "Made for my son's wedding, this is the only cake that I've done. Although one cannot see it in the photos, there are mini-lights on top of the gazebo. Mini champagne glasses decorated with ribbons, flowers and pearls hold the candles on the stairways. . . . Ruffles on the top of the gazebo are from a #104 tube. Cherub fountains and silk floral arrangements, along with blue tinted water in the fountain, complete the decoration."

I could stray forever down *Mailbox News*'s pleasant byways, they are so blissfully distant from the snide food world I know. Proud readers submit photos of cakes made to look like a steak complete with fat, cakes "decorated attractively with a risen Christ figure on one half," cakes named "Nurses Holding Hands," covered with light-purple buttercream.

"I wanted to use three fountains in my design," a cake decorator writes, "so I had two styrofoam 12″ round cake forms hollowed out so I could place the fountains inside." Styrofoam cake forms covered with icing are another trend I was unaware of; several featured bakers are clearly proud of themselves for *not* using any Styrofoam in their designs. One woman even brags, "By the time the pictured cake was made I'd learned to use Betty Crocker's packaged icing mix and Crisco for the icing, so the color would stay white."

I can hardly afford to be snide, though. My brother has just announced his engagement. The wedding is in August, and I am going to make the four-tier hazelnut and coffee-buttercream cake. The bride is from the Soviet Union, so the top of the cake will be shaped like a cathedral, with meringue peaks for the domes. I have plenty of time to practice; every guest at my house from now until August will be eating cake. There will be no pastillage flowers, no gum pastillage or teardrop filigree, and I can assemble the cake in my parents' basement.

Still, I know that, by the night before the wedding, I will wish I had settled for plain old cake mix and Crisco. □

Ann Hodgman wrote about peppers for the January 1991 Connoisseur.

(Continued from page 81)

formed a kind of barrier—a pointillist Berlin wall—that separated the artist from the objects of his desire. In the seventies, Polke went on to produce a body of pornographic drawings that stop beating about the bush and drool. I like these the least, of all his works.

Another adjective frequently attached to Sigmar Polke is "fecund," and fecund he certainly is, trying out a bewildering variety of styles, techniques, materials, and subjects in the twenty-five years of manic exploration that have followed his Pop-art phase. Just as one image inside a Polke picture does not seem to relate directly to another, so one style of Polke painting can be followed immediately by something completely different.

In 1988 he reached the apotheosis of his gaseous style in a series ponderously entitled *The Spirits That Lend Strength Are Invisible.* These huge canvases were first soaked in artificial resin and then sprinkled with assorted exotic powders that were making their debut in modern art: pure tellurium dust and granules of meteorite; ground nickel and silver nitrate. In the last painting in the series, Polke embedded real Neolithic tools in the swirling resin. In so doing he revealed himself to be yet another German artist in search of origins and roots. It is a hopeless task, and it has produced hopelessly inchoate, imageless paintings, Wagnerian in scale, tone, mood, and imprecision.

Having tried to be a city slicker, the small boy from Oels has metamorphosed into a full-blown German melancholic. The apes have been banished from his scapes. I suppose he has claimed his destiny. □

The Sigmar Polke exhibition, organized and first shown by the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, will be on view at the Hirshhorn Museum, in Washington, D.C., until May 7. From there it will travel to the Museum of Contemporary Art, in Chicago (June 22–September 8), and thence to the Brooklyn Museum, New York (October 11–January 6). Although New York's Museum of Modern Art wanted to mount the show, Polke, in typical, idiosyncratic style, preferred to give it to Brooklyn.

Waldemar Januszczak is in charge of arts programming on Channel 4, in London; he often writes about art for Connoisseur.

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Around the world in six hours

BY ROBERT RAGAINI

ILLUSTRATION BY BEATA SZPURA

I have a secret. Every major U.S. city is littered with foreign tourist offices whose job it is to sell their countries to American travelers. Naturally they are staffed by citizens of those countries, and though they are supposed to put on the best face possible, they cannot help being who they are. By which I mean that what you see in these offices is precisely what you get when you set foot on their native ground. Like Alice, you step over the threshold into a different world.

The implications are tremendous. No longer must you spend time and money packing, booking hotels, renting cars. Your head need not spin from jet lag, your stomach from Montezuma's revenge. Using my system, you can be in Thailand at ten o'clock, at ten-thirty in Sweden, at eleven in Brazil, and at eleven-thirty in Japan. You simply immerse yourself in the atmosphere of one country and move down the street to the next, a tour of the world in less than a day without leaving home. That is the secret.

Once this idea came to me I decided to put it to the test. I donned my tweeds, shook out my umbrella, and took the tube to Great Britain. As everyone knows, the English are proper, neat, understated, well-groomed, organized, and anal-compulsive. The British Tourist Authority, on New York's Fifty-seventh Street, is the same, with maps, itineraries, accommodations, sporting activities, entertainment, all arranged in convenient racks and free for the taking.

London? Of course. The Cotswolds; yes! The Scottish Highlands; why not? I loaded a large envelope with gorgeous brochures, bowed to the maiden smiling at her desk, and tiptoed out.

On three sides of the sidewalk overlooking the skating rink at Rockefeller Center are dozens of flagpoles bearing the flapping insignia of the world's nations. Clustered within the buildings are many of their tourist offices, some proudly exhibiting their best features behind display windows on the main promenade, others behind closed doors at the end of long corridors.

The Intourist door was locked. I reached for the button, but before I hit it the door buzzed open. Where may I travel? Read the brochure "Travel Centers of the USSR," the beautiful but very serious woman explains. She sits behind a metal desk in a small, austere room. I sense an arctic chill. If I want to visit a nearby town, it may not be more than twenty-five miles from said "travel center." "We're allowed within only twenty-five miles of Columbus Circle," she says imperiously. *Glasnost,* comrade.

I headed for Forty-ninth Street and Switzerland. I had a yen for snowcapped mountains, for *Rösti, raclette,* and glacier-fed lakes. Behind the tour desk was an immense mural of just what I had in mind. Below it a lovely young blonde was listening attentively to a dignified elderly woman. Swissair agents bustled purposefully at their terminals. Instinctively I straightened my shoulders and assumed my proper position in line.

"Perhaps you can help me," I overheard the lady say. "I bought this Swisspass, but I don't understand how it works." The girl took the brochure, studied it for a moment, and thrust it back. "You didn't read the instructions," she announced with disdain and swiveled smartly to me, but I was gone.

Nigeria Airways was on Fifty-first, but easy to miss—no sign in the window. "Reno-vation," a man said with a lilt. There was plenty of mess but no workers. Or literature, for that matter, except a flier for a concert in New Jersey by "Sir Warrior and His Original Oriental Brothers Band."

The man sat at a desk by the door, somber, a little scary. Hesitantly I asked for information on Nigeria. "Go to Kenya," he said. "424 Madison."

"But isn't this Nigeria?"

"Yes, go to Kenya. They have the information."

High in the Olympic Tower, just a few doors away, two women speaking a language that was Greek to me lounged behind a counter covered with pictures of whitewashed villages and azure seas. A man who could have used a shave came in and gave me the evil eye. "You can have anything that's on the counter," he muttered. He left, and I lingered. The women began sprinkling their conversation with English, a positive signal, I thought. Sure enough; soon we were one big, happy family, considering the merits of various yacht charters for our cruise on the Aegean.

From there I made my way back to Rockefeller Center, stopping on the way for a souvlaki sandwich, some falafel, enchiladas, and gelato for dessert. France was a smallish office for a largish country, where most of the literature was kept safely out of reach in cubbyholes behind the counter. After attempting to get the attention of someone who clearly had better things to do, I opened the one or two pamphlets I managed to purloin and discovered they were not in my mother tongue. Hey, you're going to Paris for a week? Learn the language!

And so I went on into the afternoon from country to country, until I was exhausted, like Phileas Fogg on the seventy-ninth day. After five and a half hours I was traveled out.

There was one, last visit to make. The New York City tourist booth at Columbus Circle was all show and little tell. Fancy decor contrived to conceal the appalling lack of information. Behind the counter was a bunch of noisy kids snapping gum, listening to Walkmans, ignoring the customers. Not wanting to disturb them, I swept a few brochures into a plastic "I Love New York" bag and slunk quietly out the door.

It was great to be home. □

Robert Ragaini, when not traveling, sings jingles.

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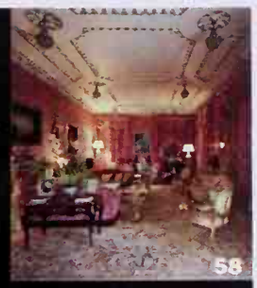

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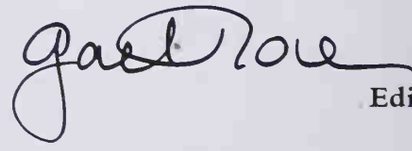
EDITOR'S LETTER

IN AN AGE IN WHICH INFORMATION IS RELAYED at dizzying speed, and after a decade of rabid consumption, it takes an act of courage to be discerning. For ninety years it has been *Connoisseur*'s mandate to transcend the hype by sorting out that which is of most value to the sophisticated reader—a mandate the magazine has fulfilled with admirable consistency. It's a record we hope will continue through the nineties and into the next century, when it will surely be needed most.

As our nation becomes increasingly reflective about its acquisitions, it is more crucial than ever to scrutinize the world's offerings and ask the question Cole Porter once posed: "Is it the good turtle soup or merely the mock?" The new *Connoisseur* offers a variety of means to that end, among them two sections: Connoisseur's Word, which profiles our most valuable creative talents and looks at their most recent—and sometimes most curious—entanglements and projects; and the Arbiter, which pinpoints the most interesting new faces, the most exquisite objects, and events of note—a visual and intellectual feast.

Connoisseur's June cover story is a detailed account of the restoration of Princess Diana's ancestral homes, Spencer House and Althorp. Other features, such as our profile of the bizarre life and times of self-styled aesthete Huntington Hartford, by Lisa Gubernick, and Peter Green's investigative report on the pillaging of Czechoslovakia's cultural treasures, explore the intimate, complex relationship between people and things—a fascinating dynamic that tells us as much about our society as a whole as it does about the objects discussed. The new *Connoisseur* also offers regular, monthly features, including Valuations, an historical overview of art and money and how the connoisseur may benefit from a look at the past; happenings from museums and galleries the world over; and in future months the debut of columns such as the Discerning Traveler and the Contemplative Gardener—all created with the idea that what's important is the ability to look at the world with a fresh eye.

Cole—we hope you're watching.



Gael Love
Editor-in-Chief

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CONTRIBUTORS

STEPHEN BIRMINGHAM has chronicled the life-styles of the American aristocracy in countless books, including his latest, *Rothman Scandal* (Little, Brown). He looks back on Palm Beach society the way it was. Page 80.

SIMON BLOW's last book, *Broken Blood*, detailed the history of his mother's family, the Tennants. For our cover story, he exposes the controversy involving Althorp and Spencer House, Princess Diana's ancestral homes. Page 58.

DEBORAH GIMELSON, formerly an editor at *Art & Auction*, is now working on a book about contemporary artists' collections. She talks to the Zurich dealer Thomas Ammann, the man behind the AIDS benefit to be held at the Basel Art Fair this month. Page 36.

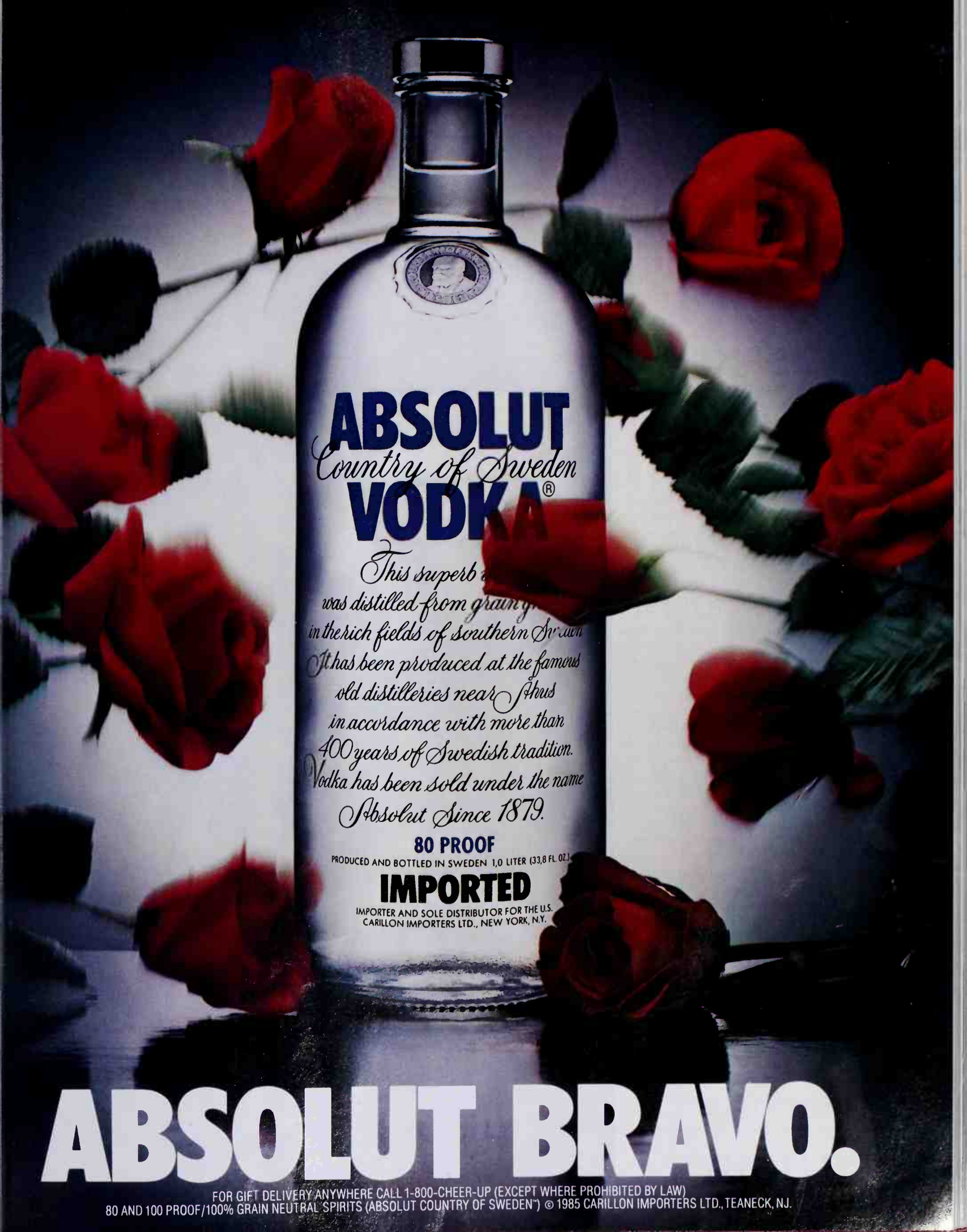
STEPHEN FARBER is the author of three books and writes on film for the *New York Times*, *American Film*, and *Premiere*. This month he goes behind the scenes with the director Mike Nichols. Page 14.

PETER GREEN, the Prague correspondent for United Press International, is writing a book of walking tours in that city. He exposes the smuggling operations of the new Czechoslovakian "mafia." Page 74.

STEPHEN WALLIS, whose photographs have appeared in European editions of *Vogue*, *Elle*, and *Marie Claire*, travels from his Paris base to Palm Beach to shoot diamonds and this season's swimwear. Page 88.

DAVID RIEFF's most recent book is on Los Angeles and the new immigration, to be published this fall by Simon & Schuster. He traveled to Hamburg to interview Robert Wilson, the leading avant-garde theater director. Page 28.

LISA GUBERNICK, a senior editor at *Forbes*, adapted her recently released book *Squandered Fortune* (G. P. Putnam) for our article on the rise and fall of Huntington Hartford. Page 68.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JUNE 12 *Invisibly-set ruby leaf brooch,* Van Cleef & Arpels. *Auction estimate: $70,000-90,000*

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JUNE 26 *An American gold Freedom Box given by the City of New York to John Jay in 1784. Auction estimate available on request.*

JUNE 20 *Cistophorus of Claudius,* circa *A.D. 41-42, struck at Ephesus. Auction estimate: $2,000-3,000*

JUNE 18 *A marble torso of an athlete, Roman Imperial, 2nd century A.D. Auction estimate: $30,000-50,000*

JUNE 19 *A* Fabergé *gold and carved chalcedony pelican. Auction estimate: $30,000-40,000*

JUNE 7 *Sir Alfred Munnings, P.R.A.,* Start of a Steeplechase *(detail). Auction estimate: $400,000-600,000*

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LETTERS

WHAT WAS HIS RANK?

In "The Soul of Mexico" [March], Jamie James refers to the classic account of the conquest of Mexico by one of Cortés's "lieutenants." Elsewhere, however, Bernal Díaz del Castillo, author of *The Discovery,* has been described as "a foot soldier, a private who slogged. . . ." I am curious. Which is the fact?

Emilio Caballero
Amarillo, Texas

Jamie James replies: I used the word "lieutenant" loosely. Díaz described himself as an "ensign," but the question of rank in Cortés's army of irregulars is probably irrelevant.

PEPPERED STRAWBERRIES

I was amused to read Robert Ragaini's "Pepper Your Strawberries" [March]. I grew up in England, the land of strawberries and cream for tea. My mother and my Scottish grandmother before her would never have dreamed of serving strawberries without pepper.

My grandmother died before the Second World War, so I don't know where she acquired this custom. Perhaps she picked it up on the Grand European Tour. However, I do know that others in England use pepper on their strawberries, and so I suspect that this culinary delight is well established on both sides of the Channel.

Barbara W. Hill
Northfield, Minnesota

A SORRY BUSINESS

I read with interest the article by Barry Herem on the fate of the Klukwan Whale House material ["The Curse of the Tlingit Treasures," March]. This unfortunate matter has long drawn the concerned attention of many in my profession, but the photo of the famous Woodworm Dish in its present sorry state was a shock for which most of them will be unprepared.

If the people of Klukwan want to keep their treasures at home in safe condition and under their own control, there is a precedent they might consider. At Alert Bay, British Columbia, the Nimkish band of the Kwakiutl people own and operate the U'Mista Cultural Centre, in which they have on exhibit a fine collection of their own patrimony. Their galleries have all appropriate physical and environmental security, and the presentation would do credit to any metropolitan museum. The elders of Klukwan would certainly profit from a visit to Alert Bay, but from all indications they should do it promptly.

Richard Conn, Curator
Department of Native Art
The Denver Art Museum
Denver, Colorado

THE ONES THAT GOT AWAY

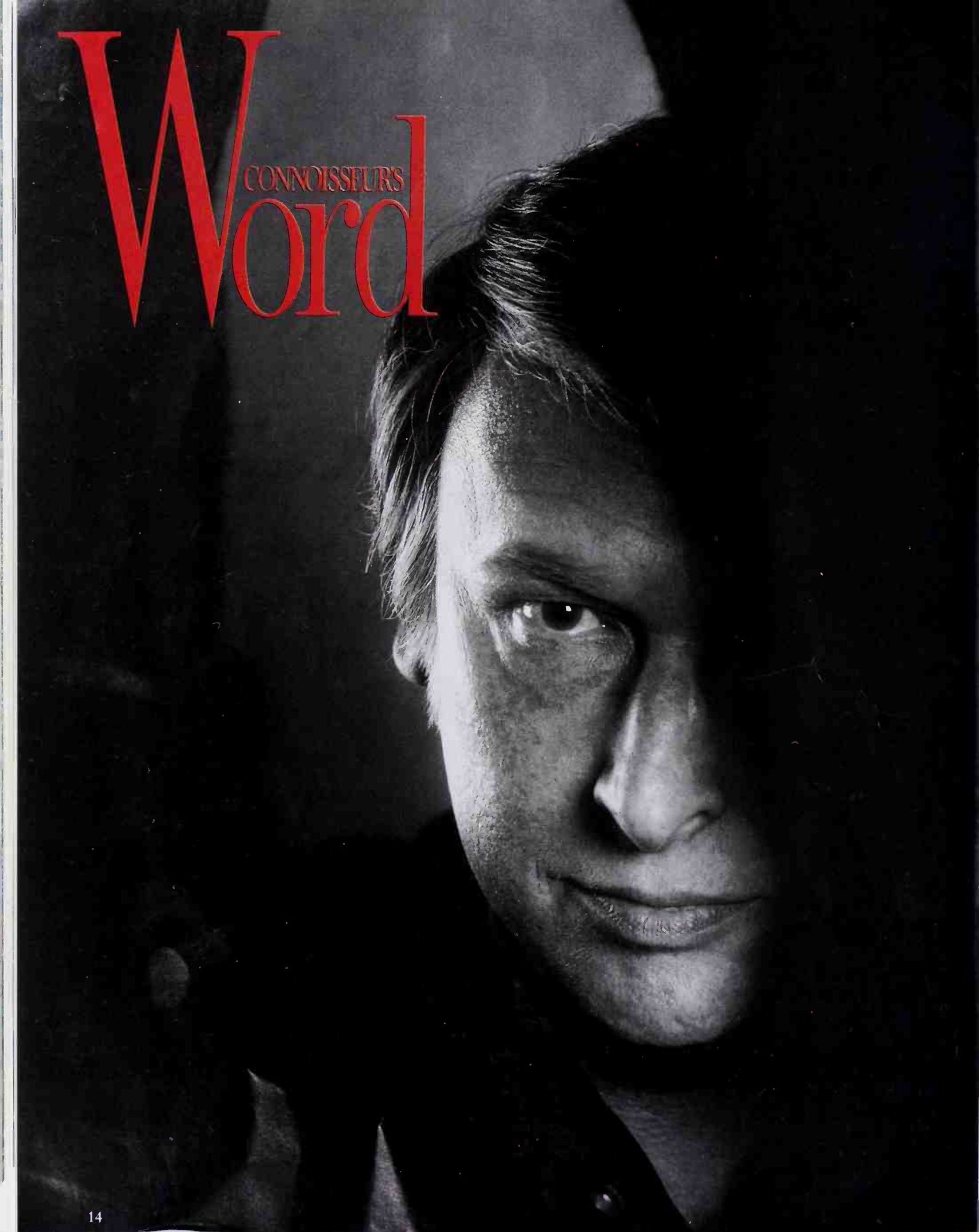
I enjoyed Stephan Wilkinson's article on the Bugattis ["The Myth vs. the Machine," February]. In the mid-1960s I was involved in an attempt to purchase two Royales. John Shakespeare, something of an eccentric, had accumulated thirty Bugattis, including the Park Ward Royale, in a little town in Illinois. At the very time the brothers Schlumpf were attempting to corner the world's Bugatti supply, I became aware of the Shakespeare collection and remarked to my father and a business crony of his that it might be a good investment. We flew to Centralia, Illinois, to inspect the Shakespeare collection, which was to be sold in toto or not at all. The Schlumpfs' representatives had already made an offer, but we got the impression that Shakespeare would prefer the collection stayed in the U.S.

A figure that might receive a favorable response was suggested. I inspected the Bugattis and placed what I thought was a reasonable price on each. We then consulted an expert, debated, and adjusted my estimates, arriving at a total above the suggested figure. The three of us discussed the investment potential of the purchase through most of the night and in the end decided, considering the uncertainties of appreciation and problems of storage and maintenance, that it would be unwise. The conclusion was largely influenced by my advice. Until he died my father never failed to remind me of my sage counsel.

Peter D. Williamson, M.D.
Yale University School of Medicine
New Haven, Connecticut

Stephan Wilkinson comments: Peter Williamson is one of the leading Bugatti experts and owners in the U.S., and his Bugatti Atlantic is one of the rarest and most spectacular Bugattis in the world. The two Royales that he and his father had a chance to buy are now in the French National Museum. Their cost in the 1960s was probably on the order of $100,000. Today those two cars are worth maybe $40 million.

Connoisseur's Word



In 1984, directing David Rabe's play *Hurlyburly.*

LEFT: GREGORY HEISLER *RIGHT:* LOOMIS DEAN, *LIFE* MAGAZINE, © TIME WARNER INC.

WAITING FOR MIKE

Even in middle age, Mike Nichols has maintained the allure of the wunderkind—an allure undiminished by the loss of the edge that characterized his best works: the routines with Elaine May and the films The Graduate, Carnal Knowledge, *and* Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? *While his recent projects for stage and screen—including his newest film,* Regarding Henry, *starring Harrison Ford—are tonics for an anxious age, some wonder whether the good life and marriage to the intellectual cheesecake Diane Sawyer have made Nichols just a little too happy for his art.*

By Stephen Farber

The comedian in 1962.

Warren Beatty escorted Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis. Candice Bergen was there, along with Buck Henry, Art Garfunkel, and Brooke Hayward. They had come not to a charity benefit or a movie premiere but to an auction of Arabian horses held by their friend Mike Nichols, on his sixty-acre Connecticut farm. Manhattan tycoons and show-business luminaries mingled with the international horsey set that day. The sale reportedly netted Nichols a cool million, but it was as much a social event as a money-raiser, illustrating Nichols's secure position in the American aristocracy. His little black book of nearest and dearest reads like a *Who's Who in America;* Mikhail Baryshnikov, Kay Graham, Stephen Sondheim, Carly Simon, and Meryl Streep are just a few of the famous names there.

(Continued on page 18)

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ENGINEERED LIKE NO OTHER CAR IN THE WORLD

Nichols, Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton on the set of *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*

Mike Nichols, fifty-nine, may no longer be regarded as the greatest American director, but he is without doubt the one who travels in the most glamorous set. His marriage to the TV newswoman Diane Sawyer in April of 1988 solidified his standing among the elite. His movie career is also humming along, with his latest—*Regarding Henry,* a feel-good fantasy starring Harrison Ford and the hot new actress Annette Bening—likely to light up the box office for Paramount this summer.

He is rich and famous, prolific and successful. But is he contented? Just a few years ago the license plate on Nichols's Mercedes read ANOMIE ("personal unrest, alienation, and uncertainty that come from a lack of purpose or ideals" was too long). It was his gift for expressing contemporary urban Jewish angst, displayed in his celebrated nightclub act with Elaine May in the 1950s, that first brought Nichols to the public eye. His anxieties were visible offstage as well. A famous story is told about the time when the Nichols-and-May show was running to packed houses on Broadway and a furious Nichols called the show's producer, Alexander Cohen. "This theater is in total darkness," he bellowed. It turned out that one of thirty balcony lamps had gone out, and Nichols's keen eye had caught it. Somehow he had managed to focus on the one burnt-out lamp rather than the twenty-nine that were blazing brightly.

With Neil Simon, *left,* in front of the Broadway theater that debuted their first collaboration, in 1963, as writer and director.

In one of the most revealing interviews he ever gave, in December of 1968, several months after winning an Oscar for directing *The Graduate,* Nichols told Nora Ephron that he believed there are two kinds of people in the world. The first kind, of which he cited the Kennedys as the prime example, are those "to whom all the good things happen in the first part of their lives . . . and then, because they can't escape this, all the terrible things happen." The second kind are people to whom "the not necessarily terrible but the pretty bad things happen in the first part, and then things get better and they get better and then they're great."

Nichols included himself in that second category. During his childhood, he suffered anti-Semitism in his native Germany, the early death of his father, and a freakish disease at the age of four that left him without any hair on any part of his body. Then he went on to tremendous success—first in partnership with Elaine May in the most brilliant high-comedy act in America and then as the premier theater and film director of the 1960s. Yet Nichols did not see his victory as complete. "There is only one drawback," he continued in that interview with Ephron, "and that is that one is poisoned forever by the bad things that happened in the beginning. So that if one had a choice, I think, one would choose to be the first kind; they are the lucky ones, because they get to experience the untainted good half. Otherwise, although you can fight it and overcome it and make something joyful and pleasurable out of your life, there is always some poison left from before."

Since that time, getting the poison out has been a major objective in Nichols's life. Granted, some residue of his unhappy past has trailed Nichols in his fabulously successful life; he has had major career setbacks and periods of depression and has gone through four marriages and numerous love affairs in a tortured journey to "something joyful and pleasurable." The painful memories may also help to explain the sour, sardonic view of human relationships that flavors many of his most distinctive movies. But Nora Ephron, who has known Nichols since that interview twenty-three years ago and who more recently became a working partner when she wrote the scripts for *Silkwood* (with Alice Arlen) and *Heartburn,* feels that Nichols has finally come close to reaching his goal. "He is a much happier person today than I've ever seen him," Ephron contends. She attributes much of his newfound serenity to his three-year-old marriage to Diane Sawyer. "When I met Mike, he was as cynical about romance as anyone I knew," Ephron recalls. "Now he does a very good imitation of a romantic and has actually become one. Even he has to concede that life has treated him well." The incidental rewards include a Manhattan brownstone ornamented with Picasso and Matisse, the Connecticut retreat, and a Santa Barbara, California, ranch where he raises Arabian horses.

If his personal life is more tranquil, his career is also on track again after a bleak period in the 1970s and early 1980s. His last two films, *Working Girl* and *Postcards from the Edge,* were successful with both critics and audiences. They also exhibit a slightly altered sensibility. While hardly free of acerbic jokes, they have a more restorative mood than many of his earlier films. "I do think the world has changed, and I have changed with it," Nichols said recently. "My initial impulse in work was to prove what fools we mortals were. And now I believe there's hope for people—with each other—and that if you don't move toward generosity and love, you die."

Some critics have charged that he has lost his bite in recent years. Roger Ebert, for example, punctuated his review of the film version of Neil Simon's *Biloxi Blues* by lamenting Nichols's decline: "He's just another one of the hacks brought in to direct another Neil

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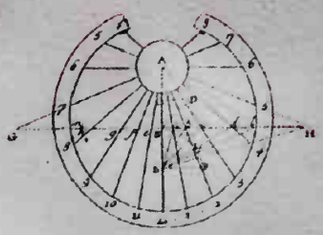

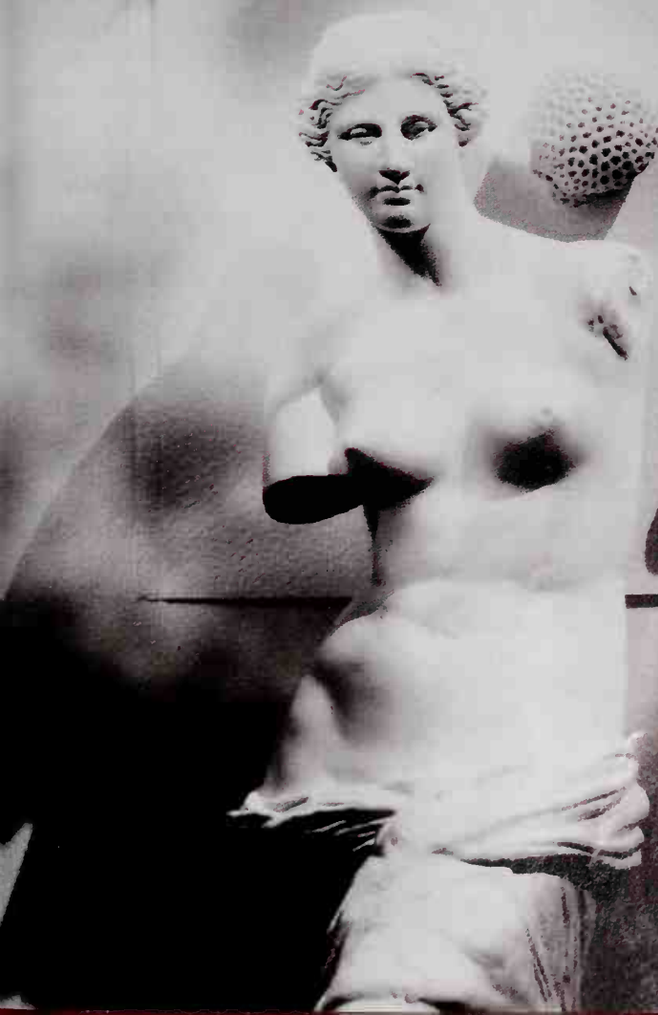

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Simon screenplay." (Nichols once appraised reviewers succinctly: "Critics are like eunuchs watching a gang-bang. They must truly be ignored.") Ebert's harsh view may not be widely shared, but Nichols is no longer the media darling he was when he won Tony awards three years in a row, then conquered Hollywood with *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* and *The Graduate*.

It could be that his fear of failure has led him to take fewer chances in his work. Or perhaps he was overrated to begin with. But then no one could live up to the accolades showered on Nichols in the 1960s. He fell victim to a typical critical reaction: excessive adulation followed by excessive hostility. His work has always run the gamut, from featherweight comedies like *Barefoot in the Park* (which he directed on Broadway nearly thirty years ago) to far more disturbing pieces like Edward Albee's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* and Jules Feiffer's *Carnal Knowledge*. He has mounted productions of Chekhov and Beckett, filmed an angry exposé of the nuclear-power industry, and then returned to a soothing Neil Simon nostalgia piece. In a way he is a classic survivor, a chameleon capable of adapting to every change in the zeitgeist. In the 1960s his anti-Establishment films reflected those irreverent times, and now *Working Girl* and *Postcards from the Edge* express the values of a more conservative society.

His latest film, *Regarding Henry*, is an upbeat drama about a ruthless, high-priced lawyer (Harrison Ford) who cheats on his wife and neglects his son and then is severely injured in a shooting and has to learn to walk and talk—and become a human being—all over again. Its twenty-five-year-old screenwriter, Jeffrey Abrams, observes, "People who've known Mike a long time have said this is the most optimistic material they've ever known him to work with. Maybe my script was too optimistic. Nichols has brought it a maturity that it didn't have." Bill Nunn, a veteran of Spike Lee's movies, who plays Henry's physical therapist in the film, calls *Regarding Henry* "a sweet story, kind of corny. It's Capraesque, an uplifting story about having a second chance."

It is tempting to read the movie—the director's second in a row about rehabilitation—as a reflection of Nichols's own creative and personal rejuvenation. But one should be cautious in trying to glean autobiographical information from Mike Nichols's movies. He does not write his own scripts and has never been a self-revealing director like Martin Scorsese, for example. In fact, Nichols prides himself on maintaining a certain amount of reserve in both his personal and his professional life. He gives few interviews, and many people who have worked with him claim that, although he was charming and scintillating, they never got close to him.

Elaine May and Mike Nichols display their uproarious symbiosis for the television cameras in 1960.

NO ONE COULD LIVE UP TO THE PRAISE GIVEN TO NICHOLS IN THE '60s, NOT EVEN NICHOLS.

"He has impeccable manners," one of his personal assistants says. "He remembers everyone's birthday and always knows when to send flowers and thank-you notes. He's like Emily Post. But he's a very private person. It's amazing how little I know him." Nichols remains just as opaque to most of his high-powered acquaintances. "All of his friends are accomplished and stellar personalities in their own right," his assistant goes on. "And yet I have no idea which of those people is really a dear and intimate friend. I often said that, if Mike were run over by a car, I would have no idea who to call, aside from his wife."

"He's extremely complicated, and that does not make it easy to know him," confirms the writer Peter Stone, who has been friendly with Nichols for more than thirty years. Nichols's sense of privacy, his refusal to share much of himself, may have its roots in a past he still wants to exorcise. His childhood might have come from a Jerzy Kosinski novel. Born in Berlin in 1931 with the name Michael Igor Peschkowsky, he belonged to a cultured Jewish family. His father was a physician who had fled Russia after the Revolution. His maternal grandmother had collaborated with Richard Strauss on the libretto for *Salome*, and his grandfather, the head of the German Social Democratic Party, was executed by the Nazis. In 1938 Mike's father escaped to America and a year later sent for his sons. Mike and his younger brother traveled by themselves aboard the *Bremen*. His mother was ill and did not make it out of Germany until 1941.

His father, who changed his name to Nichols, established his medical practice and lived comfortably on New York's Upper West Side, but he sent Mike off to boarding school, which created a breach between father and son that was never healed. Dr. Nichols died of leukemia in 1944, when Mike was only twelve.

The young Mike Nichols was equally alienated from his peers, chiefly because of his physical appearance. At the age of four he had an unusual reaction to whooping-cough vaccine and lost all his hair. "Everyone who went to school with me remembers," Nichols once confided. "I was that little bald kid. I was quietly unhappy. I felt strange and

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solitary. I didn't fit."

He remembers one traumatic incident when a bully tormented him by holding his head underwater until he almost drowned. Years later, when Nichols was first beginning to achieve success with Elaine May, that young man came backstage after one of his shows and introduced himself. "I remember you very well," Nichols said. "Your name is so-and-so and you are a shit." He asked what the man did, and when he heard that his former nemesis had become a used-car salesman, Nichols purred, "I'm very pleased."

For a long time, Nichols admitted, he sought recognition as a kind of revenge against those who had tormented or rejected him. "There was an element in everything I did of 'I'll get you bastards,' " he explained.

Nora Ephron believes that those experiences of adolescence are still very much with him. "When he directs actors," she notes, "he speaks almost entirely in metaphors, and a lot of them are high-school metaphors. He'll tell an actor, 'It's like when you were in high school and you thought this girl would never go out with you. . . .' "

When Nichols went away to the University of Chicago, his life changed. At first he planned to become a psychiatrist, but he fell in with a creative, theatrical set and abandoned his premed courses.

Among the young people in Chicago at that time were Alan Arkin, Shelley Berman, Barbara Harris, and Zohra Lampert. But no one made quite the same impression as an intense, dark-haired Jewish girl who used to attend classes, although she was not officially enrolled. Elaine May "hung around school," Nichols remembered. "She sat in on classes. She never registered. She once convinced an entire philosophy class that everybody in Plato's *Symposium* was drunk, and that was the point of the *Symposium*. She used to go into classes and do things like that and then leave."

The first time Nichols saw May, he was acting in a college production of *Miss Julie*. "One night," he reported, "there was this evil, hostile girl in the front row, staring at me throughout the performance. . . . I was about four feet away from her, and she stared at me all through it, and I knew she knew it was shit, but there was no way I could let her know that I knew it also."

Not long after that, he saw her again on his way home from his night job as disc jockey at a college radio station. She was waiting for a train in the Illinois Central terminal when Nichols walked in. He recalled, "I sat down next to her, and I said, in a German accent, 'May I sit down?' And she said, 'If you weesh.' And we just started a kind of foreign-agent conversation for the few people on the adjoining benches and ourselves. And then I think I went home with her, and she made me her specialty, which was a hamburger with cream cheese and ketchup—that was the only thing she cooked. And then we became friends. We both had big reputations on campus as being dangerous-to-vicious, depending on the stimulus."

He later explained that May was the first great influence in his life. "Elaine woke me up, to begin with, and made me realize there were things I could do I hadn't known about," Nichols said. Over the years many people wondered whether the two had ever had an affair. Nichols finally confessed to Joyce Wadler, in a 1975 *New York Post* interview, that, yes, he and Elaine had been romantically involved "once or twice" when they were first getting to know each other. But their relationship consisted more of a spiritual and intellectual kinship than of sexual infatuation. The screenwriter Jeffrey Abrams, who has seen them together several times in the last year, says that they are still "like one person in two bodies."

Nichols and May moved to New York in 1957, and Jack Rollins, who also became Woody Allen's manager, got them booked into nightclubs like the Blue Angel and the Village Vanguard. When they did two sketches on "Omnibus" in 1958, they caught the attention of a larger public and became regulars on "The Jack Paar Show." *An Evening with Mike Nichols and Elaine May*, directed by Arthur Penn, opened in 1960 to ecstatic reviews.

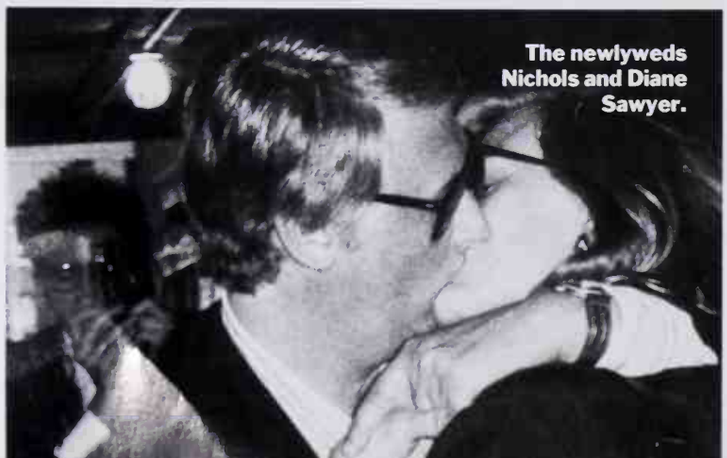
The Nichols-and-May routines, which were created in front of an audience, brought a new level of intellectual sophistication to American comedy. Heard today, these skits satirizing domineering mothers, lecherous doctors, neurotic psychiatrists, arty singles, gushy talk-show hosts, and the bureaucrats at the telephone company have lost none of their savage wit. Much of the inspiration came from the creators' own lives. For example, Nichols's mother once phoned him and opened the conversation by asking, "Hello, Michael, this is your mother. Do you remember me?" He immediately called Elaine and told her he had the idea for a new sketch.

May intuitively understood the neuroses that drove Nichols. "Where Elaine and I really met most passionately," he once observed, "was in being the offspring of classic Jewish mothers."

Success with the act brought a dramatic change in Nichols's standard of living. Their income reportedly jumped from $55 a week in 1957 to over $500,000 a year, in 1960. Nichols moved to a penthouse overlooking Central Park and began squiring glamorous starlets like Suzy Parker around.

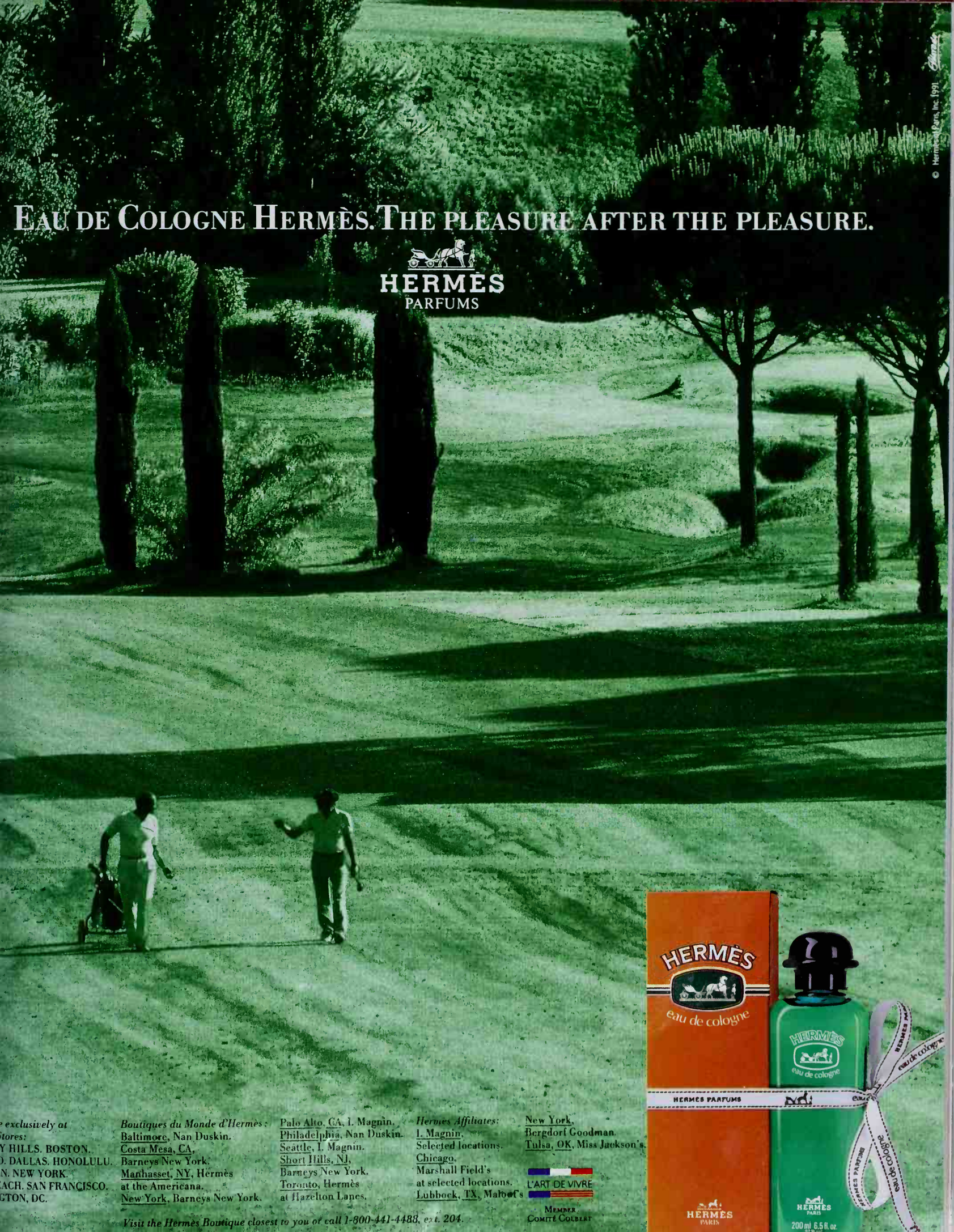
By the time the show had been running for a year on Broadway, both Nichols and May had grown restless. He admitted that Elaine was more eager to take chances than he was. "I wanted to keep doing the established pieces, and she wanted to do new things," Nichols said. "I kept wanting to work on the ones we had already, because I'm a chicken, and I don't really like performing and I don't like doing something new, because what if it doesn't work?"

When the show closed in 1961 and he and May went their separate ways, Nichols felt bereft. "I was the leftover half of something," he said. "I didn't know what the point of me was, or what I was supposed to do next." It did not take him long to find out. In 1961 Paul Sills put together a show for the Chicago-based comedy troupe Second City based on Jules Feiffer's cartoons, and Nichols directed a production. Feiffer, a friend since the 1950s, claims that he instantly recognized Nich-



The newlyweds Nichols and Diane Sawyer.

(Continued on page 26)



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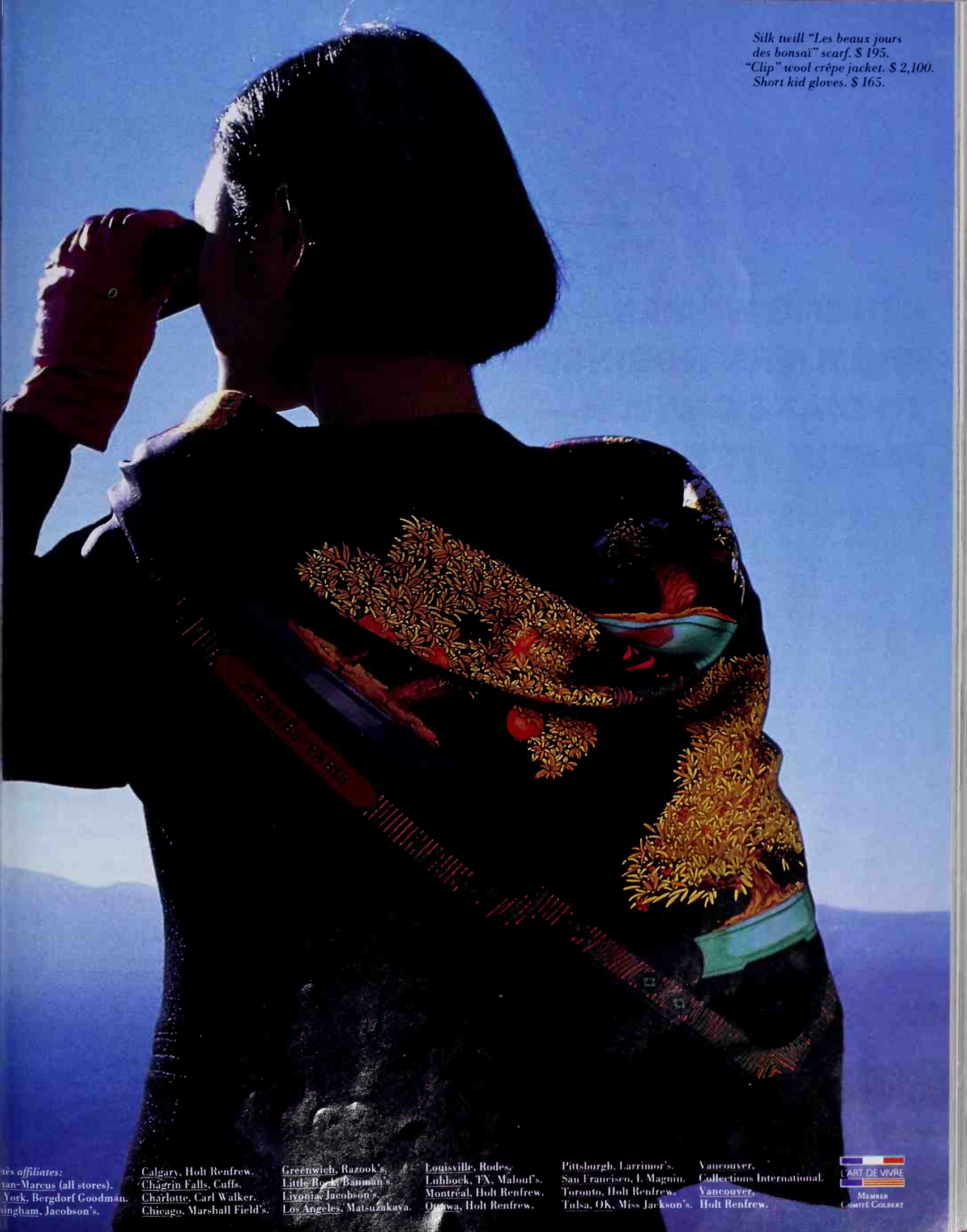

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ols's talent for directing. "He established this amazingly intimate relationship with actors," Feiffer says. "Working with him is like being at a game or a party."

The producer Saint Subber saw the Feiffer show and asked Nichols to direct a play that he was preparing for Broadway, Neil Simon's *Barefoot in the Park*. "From the first hour of the first day, I was home," Nichols said. "Instantly, I knew that's what I could do. And I'd never thought of it or planned it. But I felt adult for the first time. This was a grown-up job." Reflecting on his partnership with Elaine May, he came to realize that he had been playing the role of director without knowing it. "In the act with Elaine, we were doing little plays," he observed. "She was the gifted one. She had the ideas. I gave them a beginning and end; I gave them form."

STRONG WOMEN—FROM MRS. ROBINSON TO DIANE SAWYER—FASCINATE NICHOLS.

Once he began directing, Nichols claimed to be more comfortable in the role of interpreter than he had ever been as either author or performer. Within two years he had become the most successful director on Broadway. In 1964 *Time* magazine called him "one of the more gifted and promising new directors to take his place in the American theater since Elia Kazan left Constantinople." Nichols won the Tony award as best director three years in a row—for *Barefoot, Luv,* and *The Odd Couple*—and by 1965 he had four hit shows running simultaneously on Broadway.

His rapid success had something to do with what he counted as an ingrained gift—"having been lucky enough to be born with an ear for comedy"—and at least as much to do with his skill at cultivating people who could advance his career. His first movie job came about as a result of that off-screen politicking. Nichols had met Richard Burton in 1960 when the Nichols-and-May show was playing down the street from Burton's *Camelot*. Later, while Burton was filming *Cleopatra* and had become embroiled in the tabloid scandal of the decade ("Liz leaves Eddie for *Cleo* costar"), Nichols flew to Italy to lend moral support to the notorious couple. Liz and Dick appreciated his loyalty at a time when they were being snubbed by many fair-weather friends, and when they signed on to film *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* in 1964, it was Taylor who insisted that Nichols be hired as director.

The fledgling director knew nothing about making movies, but he was smart enough to surround himself with people who did, like the cinematographer Haskell Wexler (who won an Oscar for his moody black-and-white photography). Nichols concentrated on working with the actors and achieved spectacular results. Stanley Kauffmann, who reviewed the film for the *New York Times,* had never been an admirer of Taylor's, but he noted in astonishment, "Here, with a director who knows how to get an actor's confidence and knows what to do with it after he gets it, she does the best work of her career, sustained and urgent." Kauffmann also noted that the film, which had been brought to the screen with Edward Albee's raw language virtually intact, had become "one of the most scathingly honest American films ever made." It received a near-record thirteen Oscar nominations, including one for Nichols (though he lost to Fred Zinnemann, for *A Man for All Seasons*).

A year later he topped himself. Even before he started *Virginia Woolf,* the producer Lawrence Turman had hired Nichols to direct a low-budget comedy that he had in development. Turman had optioned Charles Webb's relatively obscure novel *The Graduate,* and he approached Nichols because of his admiration for the Nichols-and-May show. But no studio was interested in the project. It took Turman three years to find financing. "Everyone turned it down," Turman recalls, "and we ended up with Joe Levine, who was a schlocky operator."

The best parts of *The Graduate* exhibit the same deadpan, slightly askew humor as the Nichols-and-May routines. The expertly timed scenes between Dustin Hoffman as Benjamin Braddock and Anne Bancroft as Mrs. Robinson represent a pinnacle of wickedly sophisticated screen comedy. But the movie shifts gears in its second half as it chronicles the far more conventional romance between Benjamin and Mrs. Robinson's daughter, Elaine.

Nichols claimed that the ending of the film, in which Benjamin breaks up Elaine's wedding and spirits her away from the church, was not meant to be purely exultant. In one interview he said, "I think ten minutes after the bus leaves, the girl will say to him, 'My God, I have no clothes!' At least they're out of the terrible world they lived in, but they're not to be envied. I think Benjamin will end up like his parents." This is perhaps reading a great deal into one somber close-up of Dustin Hoffman. In truth, the ending of *The Graduate* is a classic example of trying to have it both ways. Nichols rouses the audience to a frenzy by baiting the older generation and turning the young lovers into rebellious heroes, but he leaves just a touch of fashionable angst so that he will not be accused of selling undiluted Hollywood schmaltz.

The Graduate reveals many of Nichols's enduring preoccupations. He has admitted that he has always been fascinated by strong women, and the most compelling character in the film is certainly Bancroft's Mrs. Robinson. But Nichols's nervousness around the character causes him to banish her to the sidelines as the movie continues. This ambivalence toward powerful, witchy women recurs in many of his films (from *Virginia Woolf* to *Postcards from the Edge*) and gives them much of their tension and considerable confusion.

The first preview of the movie in New York suggested that Nichols had a monster hit on his hands. Although he was reportedly paid only $150,000 to direct *The Graduate,* his share of 16⅔ percent of the profits made him a multimillionaire. Bosley Crowther placed Nichols in the classiest company; he called *The Graduate* "one of the best seriocomic social satires we've had from Hollywood since Preston Sturges was making them." Nichols won the New York Film Critics Award as well as the Academy Award that year, and he was touted as a genius with a Midas touch. He was also courted by all the Hollywood kingpins. At one party, another of the guests was Joseph L. Man-

(Continued on page 96)

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THE EXILE RETURNS

Is the director–artist Robert Wilson, a popular success in Europe, too visionary for American audiences?

By David Rieff

It is nearly noon, and in the slightly antiseptic confines of the Hamburg State Opera house the American avant-garde theater director Robert Wilson is once again running the chorus through a series of movements he wants them to execute in his new production of Wagner's *Parsifal*. Things have not been

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going well. Wilson is trying to coax them out of the leaden gestures with which, almost by rote, they accompany their singing, while the choir members seem bewildered and slightly resentful at being asked to think about their bodies. Again and again, Wilson stops the rehearsal after only a few bars, rushes up to the stage, and mimes the fluid motions he has imagined for the scene. The chorus watches, and, when Wilson rushes back to his position at midorchestra, they promptly move in the way they have always done. Finally, Wilson explodes. "You can't walk across the stage the way you walk down the street!" he shouts in English. After a pause, one of his assistants translates the sentence into German.

To the casual observer, it seems like a case of an immovable object meeting an irresistible force. Here is Robert Wilson, who has, since he first began staging theater in New York, in the mid-1960s, been as absorbed in exploring the possibilities of movement as any ballet choreographer, trying to persuade people whose sense of their own physicality is all but vestigial to move gracefully. And yet, hour by hour, Wilson brings his recalcitrant charges along. "I hate naturalism," he says later, during a break in the rehearsal. "Theater is, by definition, an artificial form, and the sooner we can accept this, the better. Think of the stories in the great classical repertory: a girl turning into a swan, a boy receiving the Holy Grail. Those are *tales*."

"I HATE NATURALISM. THEATER IS AN ARTIFICIAL FORM, AND THE SOONER WE CAN ACCEPT THIS, THE BETTER," SAYS WILSON.

It is not a view that most American theatergoers would agree with. On the contrary, the dominant style on the American stage remains naturalism, which is perhaps why Wilson, whose concerns are above all about form, has been working almost exclusively in Europe for the past decade. Not for him the theater of the word, whether based on the Method, as taught by Lee Strasberg, or, more recently, in the jumpy repartée of Hollywood and prime-time television. Wilson's work has been called "the theater of images" because it relies on elaborate stage pictures rather than story or dialogue. Wilson's concern with visions and the visual has left some skeptical audiences feeling that his productions, for all their superficial charm, are all but contentless. And, indeed, they do owe more to George Balanchine and Jasper Johns than to Eugene O'Neill or David Rabe. Wilson does not so much tell stories in a linear fashion as create environments.

The forty-nine-year-old director is best known in America for *Einstein on the Beach,* the opera he co-created with the composer Philip Glass in 1976; *Deafman Glance,* a "silent opera" that grew out of his work with a thirteen-year-old deaf-mute; and the twelve-hour *CIVIL warS*. These pieces are as mysterious as abstract paintings; and the fact that they are also very long and fixedly suspicious of spoken language—many of the scripts of Wilson's pieces have involved very simple phrases repeated over and over again—only increase the sense a viewer gets of being drawn less into a narrative than into a state of mind. Wilson wants to create a mental space for the audience in which to feel and look, and the tools he uses are the great formalist devices of beauty—there are no sets more alive than the ones Wilson has invented—and abstraction. "Go [to the theater] like you would to a museum, like you would look at a painting," is the way he once put it.

An American wanting to visit Robert Wilson's particular museum in recent times would, unfortunately, have had to go to Europe to do so. Part of the reason is that Wilson's theater, as opulent as any opera, is unusually expensive. The intricate sets, effects, and lighting required for a production like *Einstein on the Beach* are beyond the means of American theaters, which, unlike their state-subsidized European counterparts, rely almost entirely on private donations. Even a Brooklyn Academy of Music mounting of the accessible *The Black Rider*—a possible box-office hit—was canceled over conflicts involving technical costs. But money is scarcely the only issue. The fact is that America has not been receptive to its best theatrical innovators at any price, and if Wilson spends most of his time in Western Europe these days it is as much because he finds there an enthusiastic audience as because financing is more easily arranged.

In the process, Wilson's own work has changed considerably since the resolutely antiverbal pieces he was doing in New York in the midseventies, works in which the text served as visual counterpoint to the images and movement onstage; abroad he had collaborated with Heiner Müller, the great East German playwright, whom many Europeans consider to be the legitimate successor to Bertolt Brecht. And recently he adapted Virginia Woolf's novel *Orlando* in collaboration with Darryl Pinckney, another expatriate writer. In his new incarnation as a European director—a strange destiny for a man from Waco, Texas, whose work has struck intelligent observers as a pure distillation of American inventiveness and American distrust of intellectualism—Wilson has also become acclaimed as an opera director. Indeed, along with Patrice Chéreau, Jonathan Miller, and Peter Sellars, Wilson has become one of the leading interpreters of the traditional operatic canon, with most of the major pieces in the repertoire under his belt and bookings well into the middle of the decade.

Unsurprisingly, these days Wilson is a man in motion. The charismatic figure who was a very visible presence on the New York and Paris social scenes in the sixties and early seventies—hanging out with his benefactors Pierre Cardin and Christophe de Menil and with his fellow downtown artists Laurie Anderson and Lucinda Childs—is now someone who works almost around the clock. But even back then, Bob would appear at dinners, be charming, and then dash

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away at midnight—to meet with a lighting designer. Now, it seems, says his biographer Laurence Shyer, "he has eliminated almost everything from his life that is not directly related to his work." His friends worry about this, whispering that even by his own, stringent standards—"He acts as if he has

Easy Rider?: Even Wilson's *The Black Rider*, a cross between *Cabaret* and *The Rocky Horror Show*, has had trouble getting to the United States.

another twenty-four-hour day folded inside the first one," is the way one put it to me—he is overtaxing himself. When I visited him in Hamburg, his young East German assistant told me how surprised he had been at the pace that Wilson, almost thirty years his senior, had expected him to keep up. "When I first met Bob," he told me, "I arrived at his house at ten in the evening, and he immediately asked if we could do a little work. I thought, Sure, another hour, why not? Well, I was there until dawn, but Bob didn't seem to notice. And at rehearsal at the opera a few hours later, it was as if he had gotten a full night's sleep."

At that point, Wilson himself walked up to where we were standing. He is notoriously late for interviews and equally notoriously in demand for them, but when you finally do sit down with him, the impression he gives you is that the two of you are alone in the world together. Many people say that this is what made him so good at fund-raising when he was still trying to stay in the United States and was forced to solicit donations endlessly from rich people in New York, Houston, and Los Angeles to keep his Byrd Hoffman Foundation afloat. In some odd way, it was as if he repaid the donors' actual largesse with his own, psychic largesse. From the first moment he turns his gaze upon you, you have the feeling of being swept away into the same, magical world he creates in his theater, a world of pregnant silences, Zen elegance, and high artistic ambition.

Typically, Wilson begins our discussion by making a series of drawings. His theatrical ideas stem from his background in the visual arts; he studied at the University of Texas at Austin and trained as a painter and architect at Pratt Institute, in New York. "I don't really like explaining anything," he says. Instead, he sketches out storyboards of the scene in *Parsifal* in which the Grail appears. "I want it to be a mysterious vision," he says. "Parsifal shouldn't really know what he has seen any more than the audience does, just the way if you or I looked out the window and saw the Grail in the air in front of us, we wouldn't know what it was exactly that was going on." At that point, he walks to the window, and, following, I half expect to see just such a mysterious apparition in the quiet Hamburg street below. But of course there is nothing, and, after standing for a moment in silence, Wilson returns to the table at which he was sitting and again starts to make sketches.

He may not be comfortable talking about ideas or trying to render them onstage, but he can speak eloquently of bars of light, scrims, and costumes and invest these inanimate objects with all the force of a text. For Wilson, everything seems to be a formal problem. During one of the *Parsifal* rehearsals, he moved alongside a group of singers and said, reassuringly, "Let's continue where we left off and then go on to the next set of problems. When we get there, we'll solve them too." This combination of supreme confidence, the refusal to theorize or explain, and a fanatical attention to detail are more characteristic of a ballet master than of a theater director. To everyone's surprise, though Wilson's technique did not work very well with the mulish chorus, the great singers that the Hamburg State Opera had engaged for the *Parsifal* seemed enthralled. "I haven't got these motions down yet," said Kurt Moll, one of the world's greatest living operatic basses, during a rehearsal break. "But don't worry, Bob," he added. "I'll have it by opening night."

It was an astonishing tribute to Wilson's charisma and the force of his vision by a man who had no particular reason to want to indulge an avant-garde American theater director. The management was hardly about to fire Moll if he played the role the way he had always done in the past. But Wilson has that effect on performers. The German theater world was aghast when he persuaded the celebrated stage actress Jutta Lampe to appear in his production of *Orlando*. They should not have been. This was the director who had lured opera stars of the caliber of Jessye Norman and Hildegard Behrens to work in his theater pieces, and they had leapt at the chance to give up their identities as divas just to be in one of Robert Wilson's plays.

As for Wilson himself, this involvement with opera appears to have freed him artistically far more than it has reined him in. Indeed, one of the more curious paradoxes of his career at the present moment is that never before has so much of his work been so accessible or succeeded in reaching so wide an audience. Whether the times have caught up with Wilson or he has simply adjusted to them is something for posterity to judge, but, if nothing else, for now Robert Wilson has turned playful and seems to be having a terrifically

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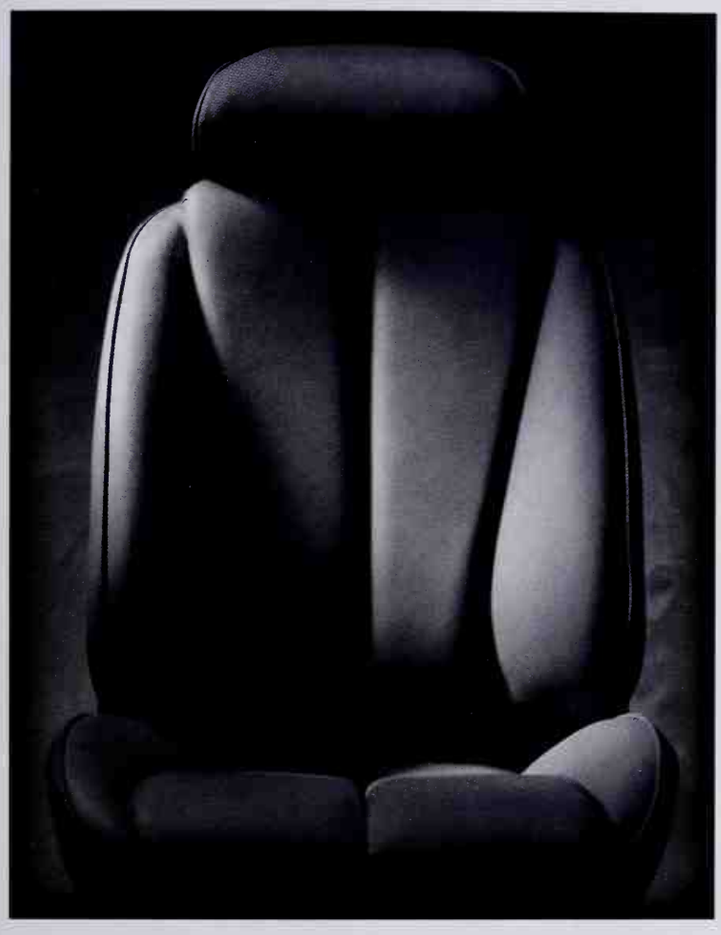

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good time. And he is drawing crowds in Europe on what, even for him, is an unprecedented scale. This success has led some of Wilson's older, more purist fans to worry that he is selling out. What other director could open a major production like the Hamburg *Parsifal* while, at the Thalia theater, only a mile or so away, also running his pop musical *The Black Rider*, which is to young German audiences of today what *The Rocky Horror Show* was to the British punk world of the seventies?

The Black Rider is a loose adaptation of a classic early-nineteenth-century German folk tale much loved by the Romantics. It concerns a young man named Wilhelm who falls in love with Käthchen, the forester's daughter. In the manner peculiar to such star-crossed romances, Wilhelm turns out to be a city boy who just cannot learn to become a marksman even though this is the only way the forester will consent to his marrying Käthchen. At his wit's end, Wilhelm makes a pact with the devil—called "Pegleg" in *The Black Rider*—who agrees to cast for him a group of magic bullets that will permit the lovestruck swain to hit any target he wants. The only stipulation the devil makes is that he keep one bullet for his own use. What starts as a way out becomes an obsession. Wilhelm is soon addicted to shooting and, on the day of his wedding, implores Pegleg to let him use that last round. The devil agrees, but when Wilhelm fires he hits his beloved Käthchen rather than the bird on the overhanging bough at which he was aiming. Käthchen dies, Wilhelm ends up mad, and the devil ends up triumphant.

It is a story that has fascinated writers ever since it was first published. Weber turned it into an opera, *Der Freischütz*, in 1821, and the writer Thomas De Quincey, author of *Confessions of an English Opium Eater*, borrowed the plot for one of his own short stories. In most subsequent renderings, however, the harsh ending of the original is replaced by one in which the devil is thwarted and the lovers live happily ever after. Wilson would have none of that, returning instead to the plot as originally written.

In any case, the artists he chose to collaborate with on the piece—William Burroughs, who wrote the text, and Tom Waits, who wrote the songs—are surely the last people a director with a happy ending in mind would turn to. Burroughs is at his high, nihilistic best, reveling in the Grand Guignol aspects of the tale. In a sense, his apocalyptic visions have always had a strong element of farce in them anyway, and in *The Black Rider*, where you know it is the devil you are seeing onstage rather than some other denizen of the Cabinet of Dr. Caligari because his ears are emitting a red light, the author of *The Naked Lunch* is able to explore this side of his talent more wittily and, perhaps, more effectively than he has done anywhere else in recent times. As for Tom Waits, his lyrics are a series of variations on the theme of how monstrous but, at the same time, how amusing the world can be. "The horsemen of the apocalypse" was the way one French reviewer referred to the collaboration among the three men, and it was anything but an inaccurate description.

AMERICANS ARE FINALLY REALIZING WHAT HOMEGROWN CULTURAL TREASURES THEY HAVE ALLOWED TO SLIP AWAY.

What it missed, however, was Wilson's sheer artistry. In fact, some Parisian critics faulted the play for being not Wilsonian enough; its very accessibility disappointed Wilson's diehard fans. For openers, he managed to keep the usually verbose Burroughs in check. "Everything was timed," he recalls. "I would draw storyboards of all the scenes and then give them to Burroughs with the running times for each marked down." The two plan to work together again, as do Wilson and Waits, who are already mapping out a new version of *Alice in Wonderland*. But more important than the individual contributions was Wilson's ability to use them in the creation of what, in its own way, is every bit as much of an opera as his interpretation of *Parsifal*. Burroughs's texts float over *The Black Rider* like the recitative in a traditional opera, while Waits's songs are like the arias, the high points of the evening that regularly bring German audiences that are already on the edge of their seats applauding and shouting to their feet.

The Black Rider is both a postmodern experiment in theater and a throwback to the cabaret of the Weimar Republic, in all its brash sexiness and formalistic verve. Germany may be a well-behaved, cautious country these days, but during the two hours one spends watching *The Black Rider* that decorum is nowhere to be found. All the chastening lessons, the tragedies of the intervening years are forgotten. It might as well be 1929. All the more startling is the fact that the man out of whose mind and sensibility all this derives hails not from the nightclubs of Berlin but the plains of Texas. There has not been such a grand act of cultural appropriation since a White Russian exile choreographer living in New York named George Balanchine devised a patriotic ballet that he called *Stars and Stripes*. In those days the cultural traffic across the Atlantic ran east to west exclusively. That is hardly the case today, when not only Wilson but many of the most innovative American artists have been forced to relocate abroad.

Still, we must be grateful for the small signs that seem to suggest that Americans are finally realizing what a world of homegrown cultural treasures they have allowed to slip away. For the first time in recent memory, Wilson has a large number of projects planned for the United States. Whereas before he returned only for special events—a restaging of *Einstein on the Beach* at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in 1984; a production of Euripides' *Alcestis* at Robert Brustein's American Repertory Theatre, in Cambridge, Massachusetts, two years later—Wilson now speaks confidently of the productions he plans to mount at the Houston Grand Opera and of other projects as well. And perhaps American audiences will discover what Western Europeans know already, that Robert Wilson is the soul of the American theater. He has been away too long. □

BILLY CRYSTAL
DANIEL STERN
BRUNO KIRBY
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TOMORROW THEY'LL BE WALKING FUNNY.
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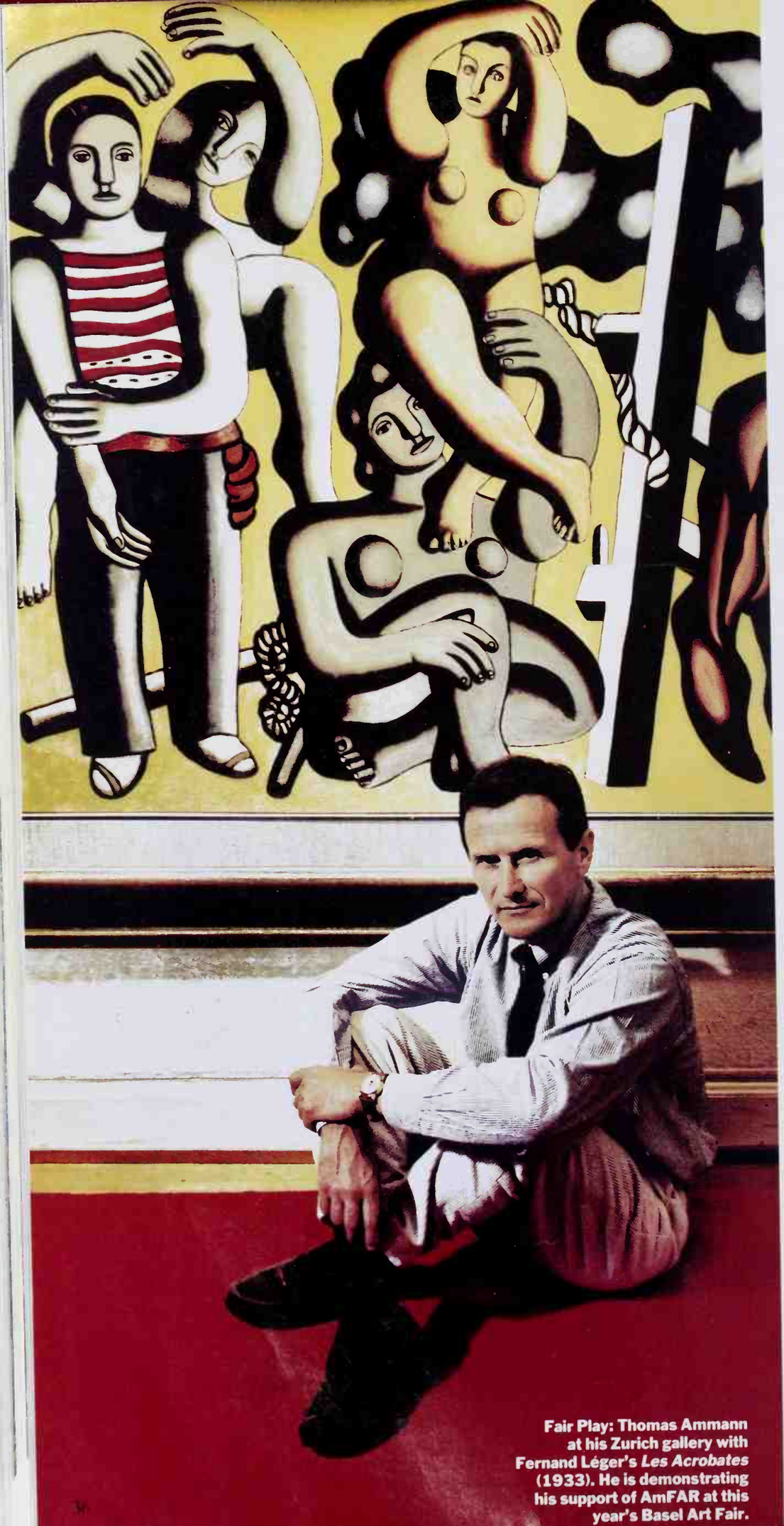


Fair Play: Thomas Ammann at his Zurich gallery with Fernand Léger's *Les Acrobates* (1933). He is demonstrating his support of AmFAR at this year's Basel Art Fair.

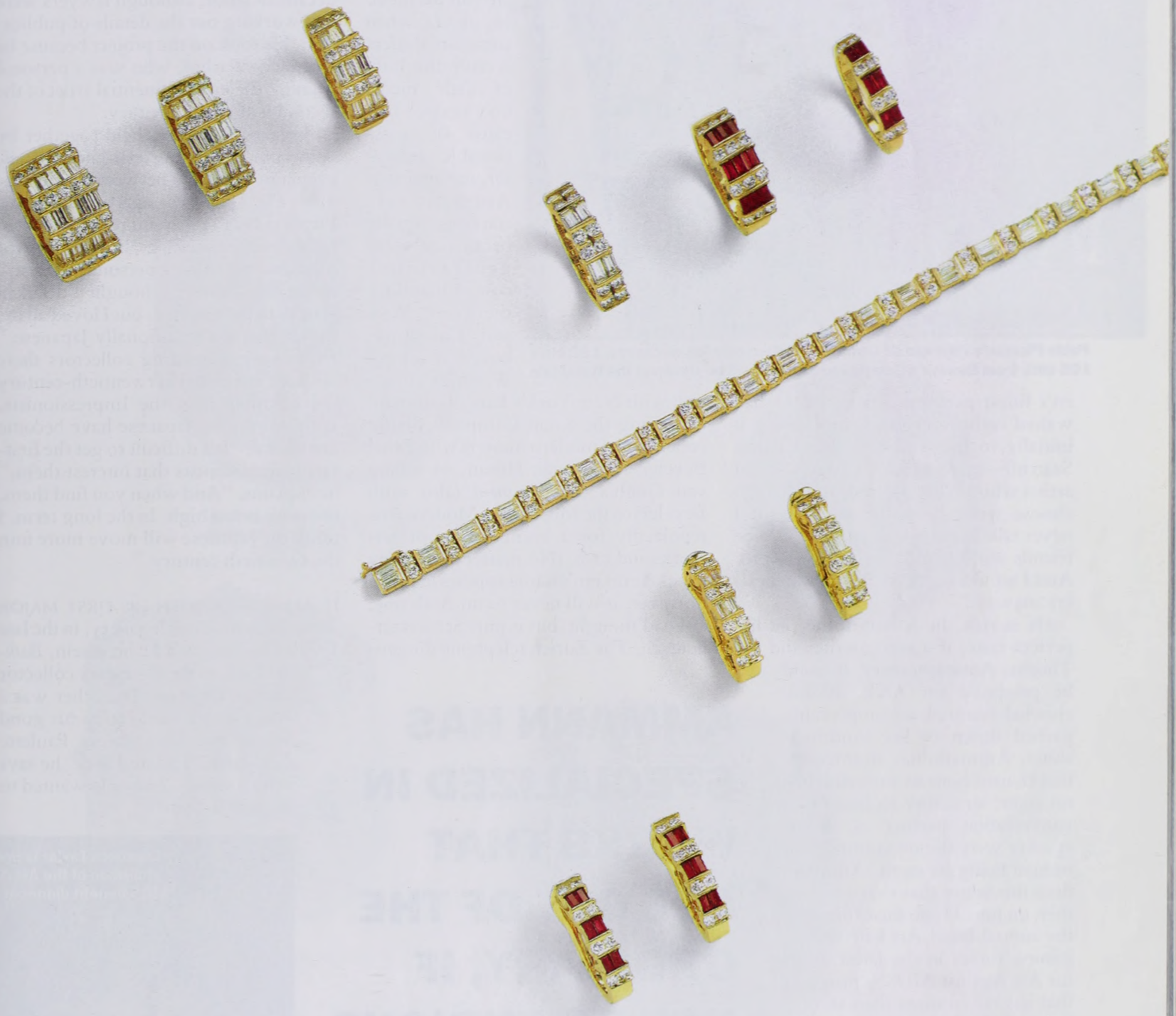
AMMANN FOR ALL SEASONS

The Swiss don't believe in 300-franc-a-plate dinners, but Liz, Bianca, and Mathilde Krim will sit down to one at the Basel Art Fair. It's Europe's first Art Against AIDS event, and the man to thank is Thomas Ammann, Zurich's raffiné *art dealer.*

By Deborah Gimelson

One of my favorite images of Thomas Ammann is of him in his Zurich gallery's second-floor library, talking as he leans adoringly on a Picasso bust of the artist's teenage lover Marie-Thérèse. After a decade and a half of being one of the most successful art dealers in the world, Ammann is also still collecting up a storm—much to the delight (and personal enrichment) of sundry living artists, since most of the art he collects was created after 1960. Amiably discussing some recent acquisitions—among them Eric Fischl's *The Bad Boy* (arguably the art-

Elegant Temptations



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Pablo Picasso's *Paysage de Cannes au Crépuscule* (oil on canvas, 130 cm x 195 cm), from Geneva's Galerie Jan Krugier, will be shown at the Basel fair.

ist's finest painting, for which he had waited eight long years after losing it initially to his rival collector Charles Saatchi)—he remarks, "I have a lot of artists who are friends first, and I love to choose work from the studio. But I never talk money with an artist. To be friends with them, you don't want to. And I would never go around the dealers anyway."

He is rich, he is handsome, he has perfect taste; if a screenwriter did the Thomas Ammann story, it could be produced for A&E. Blond, chiseled-featured, and impeccably garbed down to his handmade shoes, Ammann has an intensity that charms both women and men on sight, an ability to listen to a conversation partner as if the speaker were the most important human being on earth. Ammann does not waste that charisma, either: on June 11, he and officials of the annual Basel Art Fair will be joining forces in the latest event for Art Against AIDS, a program that has raised more than $6 million to fight the epidemic that has robbed the art world of so many talented people. The event's designated beneficiary is the American Foundation for AIDS Research (AmFAR), known for both its international and its domestic programs, and Ammann will be sharing the dais with AmFAR's founding national chairman, Elizabeth Taylor—a personal friend, who has a chalet in Gstaad.

Ammann's creditable work for the fight against AIDS is only one in a number of noteworthy achievements, particularly in business. In an era when some art dealers receive the bulk of their media coverage because of questionable behavior, the attention Ammann attracts is usually because of some professional coup—handling the New York and California–based Richard Weisman collection with New York's Larry Gagosian, or buying the Sarah Campbell Blaffer collection of modern masters with Ernst Beyeler and Vivian Horan, or selling van Gogh's *The Postman* (also with Beyeler) to the Museum of Modern Art, reportedly for a combination of artworks and cash. (No matter how many times Ammann's name appears in print, however, it will never be an Arab one, as I had thought, but is pure Schweizerdeutsch. The Zurich telephone directory has pages of Ammanns.)

AMMANN HAS SPECIALIZED IN WORKS THAT ARE OUT OF THE ORDINARY, IF NOT DOWNRIGHT CONTROVERSIAL.

At age forty-one, the collector works fourteen-hour days. Early this spring, he was negotiating the purchase of a major cubist Picasso painting, one he could not yet discuss freely ("Let's just say it's the kind of painting you don't find every year"). And the first volume of the catalogue raisonné of Andy Warhol had just been completed after a decade of labor, although lawyers were still working out the details of publication. He took on the project because he considers Warhol, who was a personal friend, "the most influential artist of the second half of this century."

Projects like these, held together by Ammann and a fourteen-person staff, keep him bouncing between world capitals. He keeps an apartment at the Pierre in New York and recently visited Japan for the first time. "I went only for pleasure, out of pure personal interest," he insists. "I never thought I'd fall in love with the country, but I loved all the things that are traditionally Japanese." He is now cultivating collectors there who are interested in twentieth-century work rather than the Impressionists, with whom the Japanese have become associated. "It's difficult to get the first-rate Impressionists that interest them," he explains. "And when you find them, the price is too high. In the long term, I think the Japanese will move more into the twentieth century."

IT ALL BEGAN WITH HIS FIRST MAJOR sales, from his Zurich gallery, in the late 1970s. One was of a Lichtenstein, *Bathtub Girl,* to the legendary collector Baron Thyssen. The other was a Klee, which came from his good friend the late actress Paulette Goddard. "I adored her," he says with a smile. "She only wanted to be paid in cash."

Elizabeth Taylor is honora chairman of the Art Again AIDS benefit dinner in Bas

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inlaid shakudo tsuba
gold,silver, copper on nanako ground
Hammano school. Ht. 3". 18th c.

silver tsuba with cloisonne enamels Ht. 4-1/4".
Meiji period.

copper tsuba inlaid with gold, silver, shakudo
Signed Fukugawa Kazunori. Ht. 4".
Meiji period.

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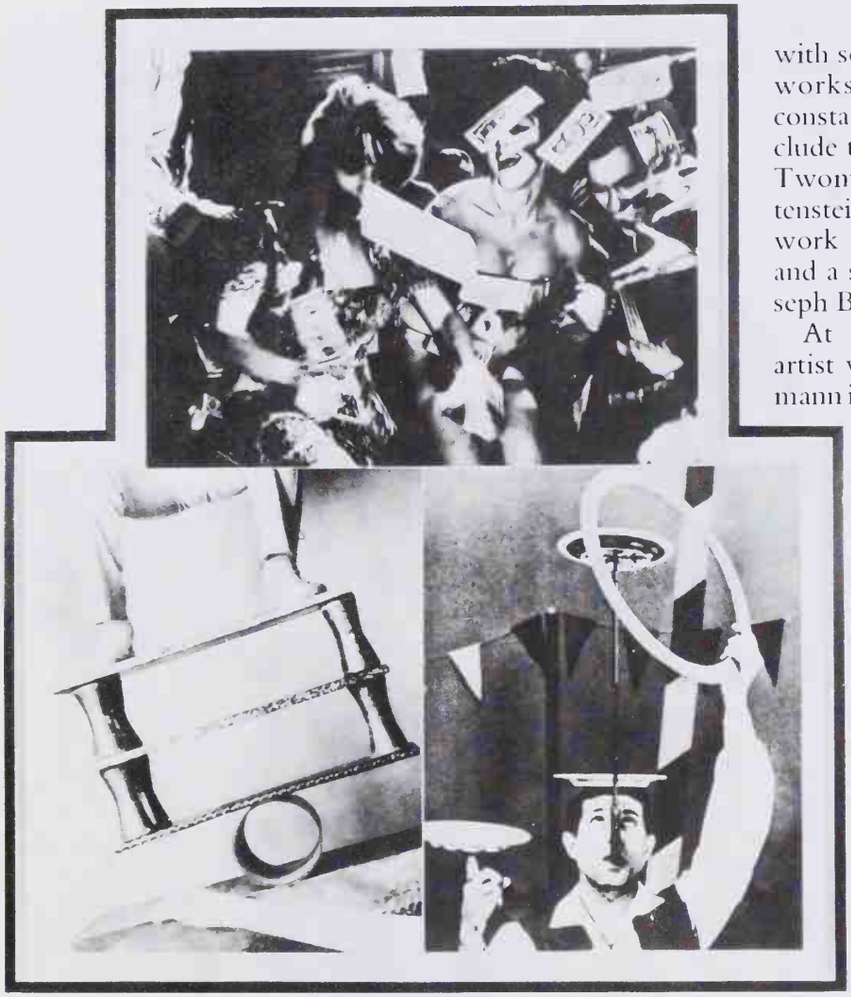


New York's Brooke Alexander Editions will exhibit John Baldessari's *Life's Balance (With Money)* (1989–90, photogravure, 51″x42½″), in Basel.

Over the years, Ammann has specialized in works that are out of the ordinary, if not downright controversial. He sold Balthus's major painting *The Guitar Lesson,* for instance, when a grande dame at the Museum of Modern Art decided it was unsuitable for viewing by children. The 1934 work depicts a seated woman with a young girl sprawled suggestively across her lap, a guitar thrown casually on the floor next to them. "I had my favorite clients turn it down because of their children," he recalls. "But this is really, really a great painting. It finally went to a Greek shipping magnate, who put it in his bedroom. I was told that, when a priest came to bless the house, he had it covered with a sheet."

No such cover-up would ever take place at Thomas Ammann Fine Art, headquartered at a grand old house high up on Krähbühlstrasse, in one of the wealthiest parts of Zurich. It is always filled with art, even though an average of seventy pieces are off traveling at any given time. A full-time registrar is necessary to keep track of the collection's comings and goings. Ammann lives with some of his favorite works, which change constantly but now include two wonderful Cy Twomblys, a 1962 Lichtenstein, an Yves Klein, a work by Sigmar Polke, and a self-portrait by Joseph Beuys.

At the moment, one artist who interests Ammann is the German Martin Kippenberger, who recently offered a limited edition of worn socks (actual socks, his own, complete with camp name tags) through Edition Julie Sylvester, in New York. "I think people misunderstand Kippenberger's sense of humor," Ammann says of the artist some have dismissed as slight, even though, both conceptually and in terms of material, he is remarkably versatile. "Even people I respect object violently to him, but he has the ability to slip into everything."

Another artist currently in favor is Robert Gober, whose domestic pieces (dog's beds, wallpaper, and the like) Ammann says have "an incredible human touch, especially following the coldness of the Neo-Geos."

The cultural hierarchy of Basel and the adventurous Thomas Ammann are not the likeliest of bedfellows. Being very properly Swiss, officials of the Kunstmuseum and art-fair representatives reportedly were resistant when first approached about the possibility of doing an AIDS event. The tide turned when Ammann decided to pay for the benefit dinner. "Everyone was impressed with Thomas's gesture, so the fair agreed to pick up the cost for all promotional materials and accommodations for some of the guests," the fund-raising troubleshooter Anne Livet remembers proudly. "Because all costs were offset, proceeds from everything go directly to AmFAR."

Potentially the glitziest event Basel will have seen in its long association with art, the dinner will be cochaired by AmFAR's cofounder Dr. Mathilde Krim, a singular advocate for AIDS research, and by Elizabeth Taylor, whose involvement with AIDS education and research was spurred by the death of her longtime friend Rock Hudson. A number of artists and art-oriented celebrities will join in the gala, invited jointly by the Ammann/Taylor team. Among those confirmed at press time were Isabella Rossellini (whose significant other, the director David Lynch, of "Twin Peaks" and *Blue Velvet* fame, has shown with Leo Castelli and is now represented by the James Corcoran Gallery, in Santa Monica), Dennis Hopper, Lauren Hutton, Jasper Johns, Eric Fischl, Ross Bleckner, Bianca Jagger, Claude Picasso, Brice Marden, Robert Rauschenberg, and the German director Wim Wenders. The organizers are also crossing their fingers that the whole roster of famous benefit-committee members, including Madonna, Richard Gere, Anjelica Huston, Yoko Ono, Mikhail Baryshnikov, and Giorgio Armani, will attend. The minimalist composer Philip Glass and torch singer Ingrid Caven have been signed as entertainers.

Overall, the project's organizers hope to raise $2 million, part of which will come from a silent auction of four major works of art ("major" being defined as having at least a $200,000 estimate). Another part will come from the first day of the twenty-one-year-old fair (this year officially named Art 22'91), at which nearly three hundred dealers from twenty-two countries will set up their booths in the elaborate, three-story Swiss Industries Fair building and await the arrival of an estimated 60,000 visitors. Traditionally, the first day has been by invitation only, and many celebrities attend. But this year, for twenty Swiss francs (with proceeds going to AmFAR), between four and seven on the afternoon of June 11, the public may attend as well and mingle with the stars. "I have to say one thing for the Swiss," Livet notes appreciatively. "Once they decide to do something, they do it 150 percent."

This is not the first time Ammann has

contributed his time and talents to AIDS charities. In May 1988, he organized an auction of new work by major artists at Sotheby's New York and scheduled it between the sale of Andy Warhol's personal contemporary-art collection and the house's prestigious evening sale. The effort raised $2 million for beds for AIDS patients at St. Vincent's Hospital (the need for which he had heard about through his friend Pat Buckley). For the auction at Sotheby's (which represented more than a dozen artists, including Eric Fischl, Brice Marden, Annette Lemieux, and Ross Bleckner), "no one had to buy art out of pity," says Ammann.

When people at the American Foundation for AIDS Research wanted to do something in Europe, they contacted Ammann right away, suggesting another auction. Politely, he turned them down. "I really didn't want to ask these artists again for the same thing," he explains. "And I hope to do another auction in New York in a couple of years. I wrote a letter and said it was a great idea, but I didn't think I could help."

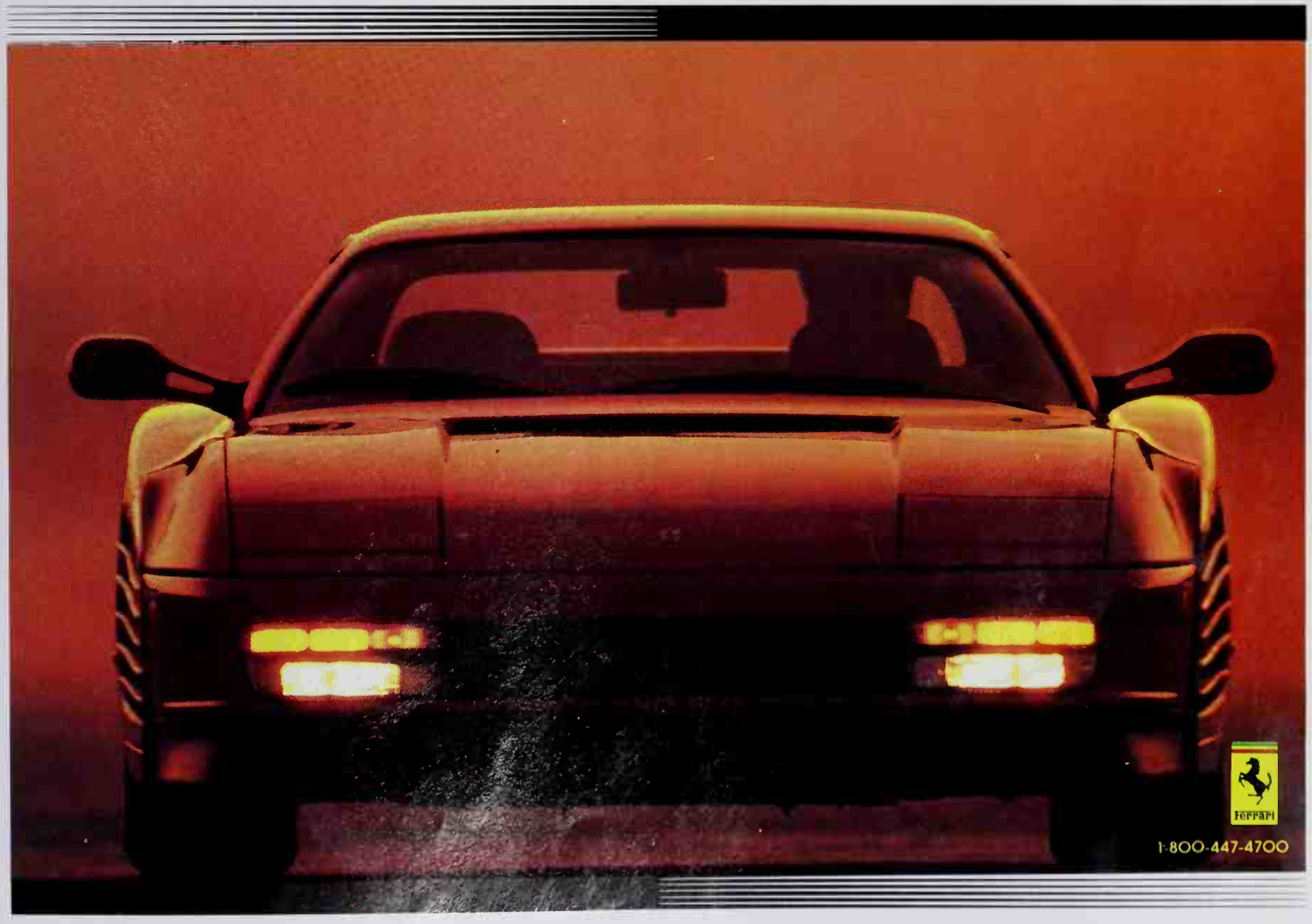
That was when Anne Livet stepped in. A kind of Annie Oakley of fund-raising, this never-say-die dynamo approaches her work with both guns blasting. The Texas-born Livet is the brains behind Livet Reichard Co., Inc., an operation that has taken on causes from the Brooklyn Academy of Music's Next Wave festival, the largest event featuring avant-garde performance art in the country, to "Don't Bungle the Jungle," an effort to save South America's rain forests.

"Anne asked me if there was any way I could help in Europe," Ammann recalls. "I already knew that dealers who had paid so much money for a booth at the art fair [booths can run to $40,000 for the week] would not want a parallel sale of new work by great artists. So we came up with the idea of this benefit dinner."

AmFAR has assured sponsors that proceeds will be put to use immediately. According to Sally Morrison, the foundation's director of new-program development, a projected $1.2 million from these events is earmarked for its international program, which includes community work in Africa. The rest will be allotted to medical research and domestic AIDS education.

"We never keep more than sixty to ninety days of operating support in the bank at any one time," says Morrison. "We don't believe in sitting on money, because the need is immediate. We're living in an extraordinary crisis situation. Money today may mean data in a year that will save people's lives."

The artists' position was stated most clearly by Brice Marden. "It seems to me that in light of things that politicians find important, this is more crucial," he said. "And artists, as humanists, are concerned with life and death. This is something directly affecting us all. It isn't about body counts; it's about people." □



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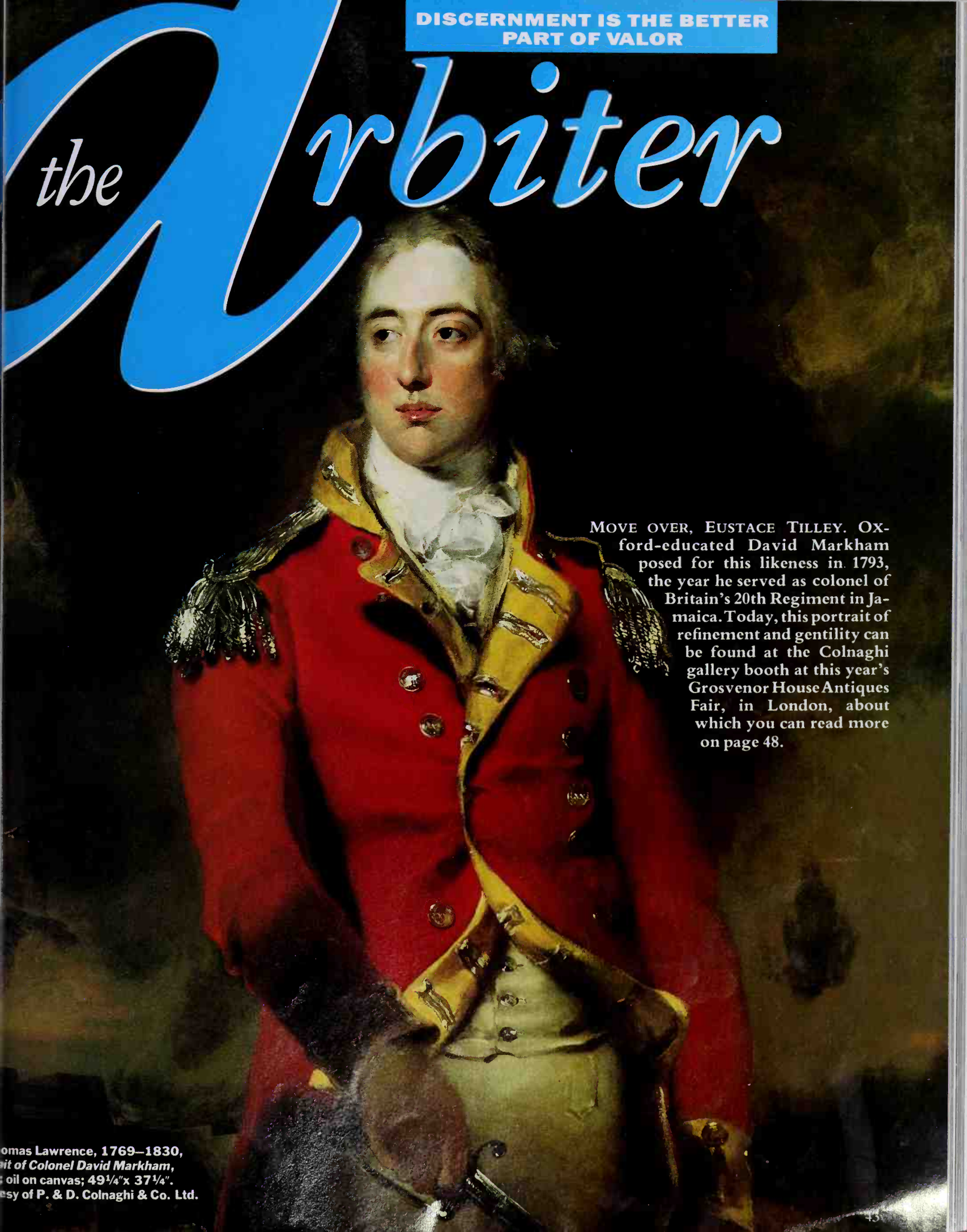


MOVE OVER, EUSTACE TILLEY. Oxford-educated David Markham posed for this likeness in 1793, the year he served as colonel of Britain's 20th Regiment in Jamaica. Today, this portrait of refinement and gentility can be found at the Colnaghi gallery booth at this year's Grosvenor House Antiques Fair, in London, about which you can read more on page 48.

omas Lawrence, 1769–1830,
it of Colonel David Markham,
oil on canvas; 49¼"x 37¼".
esy of P. & D. Colnaghi & Co. Ltd.

Loud Rock: Alba Clemente and her Rattle Ring.

Inconspicuous Consumption

THE DIAMOND DEALER JOHN REINHOLD HAS COME UP with the perfect jewelry for the low-key nineties. It is called the Rattle Ring. The rattling comes from diamonds hidden inside: a two-piece tubular band of eighteen-karat gold with eight discrete interior compartments.

Reinhold, who appears with monotonous regularity in the 807-page *The Andy Warhol Diaries*, was helped by the Perry Ellis designer Marc Jacobs in the concept for the ring. The two are working out a marketing plan for the invention. Prices range from $3,250 to $9,250, depending on the number of diamonds.

Forty of the baubles have been distributed to a cache of presumably low-key New Yorkers. The list includes the artist Francesco Clemente and his wife, Alba, the fashion designer Stephen Sprouse, the painter Julio Galan, the ballet dancer Jock Soto, the pop stars Debbie Harry and Nick Rhodes, of Duran Duran, and Rhodes's wife, Julianne.

"The thing is, nobody knows you've got the diamonds. It's a nonflashy status symbol," said one of the above. "And they're soothing."

Reinhold says he won't sell any rings without at least two diamonds inside, and they have to be D-flawless. But there is a drawback.

"I get too excited showing it to people, and I've lost a couple diamonds," said another ring wearer. "But he [Reinhold] says it's good luck." That's an expensive superstition.

—Richard Johnson

The Rite Stuff

MICHAEL TRACY IS NOT SO MUCH A PAINTER OR SCULPTOR as a master maker of high-concept ephemera. His last artwork, for instance, recently shown at the Raab Gallery, in Berlin, was an immense altarpiece made of 17,000 fresh cadmium red-orange roses. "They stayed red for about three days, then faded," he says. "The piece was very joyful, almost electrically charged. I wanted to make a significant statement about Berlin at this moment." This month, he shows less transient sculptures and paintings at the Daniel Weinberg Gallery, in Santa Monica, California.

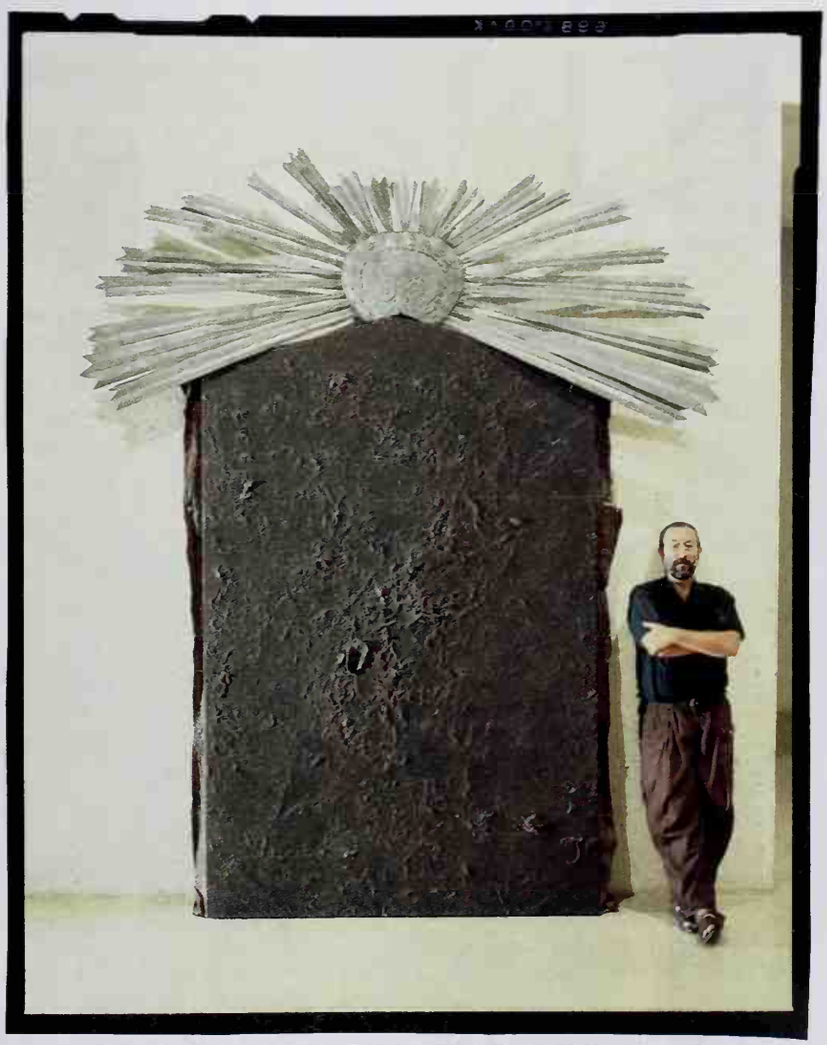
Tracy, forty-seven, has been demolishing his work for the sake of art since 1974. He performed his first ritual piece, *Sacrifice I,* in a sugar warehouse in Galveston, Texas. Tracy drove bronze spikes through a painting on an altar in front of a huge, pyramid-shaped mound of sugar and then burned it one year later. The rite, a "sacrifice of art to biblical largesse," was meant to protest the inequitable distribution of the world's resources.

Born in 1943 in Ohio, Tracy engaged in childhood rituals of a more traditional nature: he was an altar boy in a Roman Catholic church. From the start of his artistic career, Tracy was obsessed with religious icons. His early works included vast canvases painted with the rich gold of Renaissance illuminations; he used such human-body materials as hair and blood to create fetish-like sculptures. He studded his works with talismans, crucifixes, amulets, *milagros.* He made paintings in the triptych shape of altar panels. To explain his mission, Tracy paraphrases Antonin Artaud: "Art is a skin through which life can be entered and finally consumed. I look at my work as replicas of the height of the heart."

Tracy's work from the midseventies is overtly homoerotic. For one major series of sculptures and works on paper he collaged color reproductions of Caravaggio's images of ideal male beauty with black-and-white pictures from homoerotic magazines. He dripped acrylic and blood over stills of torture scenes from Pasolini's banned film *Salò/Sodom* to make another group of collages, called simply *For Pasolini.*

Tracy then embarked on a series of sculpted crosses, including one dedicated to the assassinated Salvadoran bishop Oscar Romero. Built of wood and acrylic-coated rayon, it functions simultaneously as sculpture, social statement, and shrine, like much of Tracy's work. The artist's constructed icons borrow freely from indigenous Mexican imagery, bristling with gaudy tin coronas that protrude from their tops like halos, or hung like Christmas trees with heavy golden hearts. Appropriately, several of Tracy's altarpiece-like sculptures have been installed in churches: one in Austin and one in Corpus Christi. His work is also featured in the Menil Collection, in Houston, the Everson Museum of Art, in Syracuse, and many private collections.

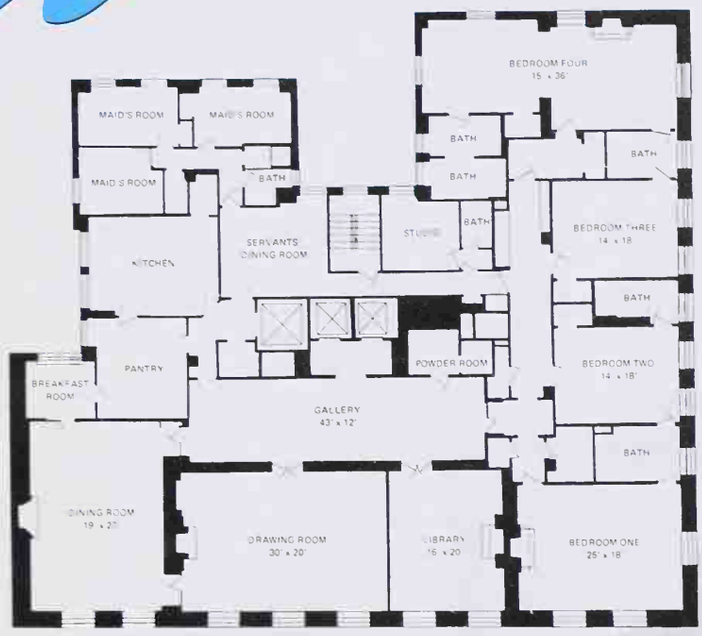
For the last fourteen years, Tracy has lived in San Ygnacio, a small Texas border town. He considers his recent work to be a passionate celebration of Mexico and of "the ultimate icon," the Rio Grande itself. Last year, on Good Friday, Tracy performed what he says will be his last sacrifice for the foreseeable future. A ten-foot-high sculpted cross, encrusted over a period of ten years with horn, fabric, spikes, hair, and small icons, was carried from San Ygnacio to the Rio Grande in a ritual reenactment of the fourteen stations of the cross. Mules dragged it onto a barge while nude, mud-coated celebrants lit ceremonial fires. Midriver, the sacrifice was ignited. The burning cross floated to the opposite bank as a soprano sang Schubert songs. The event was called *Sacrifice II, 13.4.90: The River Pierce.* About 200 people participated. "They stood on the banks of the river and wept," says Tracy, who believes his ritual act of purification is not over.



Michael Tracy with his *Fourteenth Station of the Cross* (1980–83).

Tracy hopes that his *River Pierce* project will ultimately be less a sacrifice than a resurrection. He has created the River Pierce Foundation to restore the lost border town of Guerrero Viejo, an eighteenth-century village that disappeared underwater in 1953 when the United States and Mexico built the Falcon Dam and created an artificial lake. Over the years, the lake has slowly drained away, causing the town to rise, like a specter, from the water, its beautiful church and many of the other buildings still intact. Tracy dreams of renovating the abandoned town and turning it into an artists' colony, a "fertile zone for cross-pollination between the two cultures." The goal: finally to "pierce" the intercultural barrier that the Rio Grande has become. It is his most ambitious artwork yet.

—Phoebe Hoban



The floor plan of an 820 Fifth Avenue apartment.

Musée Privé

THAT PORTION OF NEW YORK'S UPPER FIFTH Avenue known as "Museum Mile" includes the clustering of celebrated art establishments—the Frick, the Met, and the Guggenheim. What many people do not know is that 820 Fifth Avenue, a rather grand apartment building at the corner of East Sixty-third Street, holds impressive collections as well, making it an unrivaled private museum of sorts. This is where the Gordon Gettys, Jayne Wrightsman, Stavros Niarchos, and the late William Paley have all kept their treasures—objects any museum would kill for.

Rumor has it that Ann Getty "donated" an important Sèvres table to the museum in Malibu her late father-in-law built but never visited. The J. Paul Getty Museum was thrilled—until Mrs. Getty demanded its return, claiming that the directors had misunderstood the terms of her loan. The museum denies this version. The table was last seen in the Gettys' red-and-cream-striped living room at 820 Fifth. Other curiosities in the Gettys' pied-à-terre include a powder room paneled in gilt-framed fragments of a fine eighteenth-century Chinese black lacquer screen and a magnificent pair of eighteenth-century neoclassical Russian desks, in the Getty bedroom.

"Babe" Paley employed four decorators to spruce up her duplex.

Jayne Wrightsman, on the other hand, would not dream of asking the Metropolitan Museum of Art for even a single *fauteuil* back from the generous endowment of French decorative arts she and her late husband, Charles, made in the midsixties: she personally attended to the installation of every object in the Met's Wrightsman Galleries. At home, Charles Wrightsman's

Table Hopping: A took back table for her 8

Gilt by Association: The French-furniture collectors Lily and Edmund Safra.

Ship Shape: The Greek magnate Stavros Niarchos.

Winging It: The Met maven Jayne Wrightsman

former bedroom, now a library–sitting room, displays Jayne Wrightsman's nineteenth-century paintings by Alfred Stevens and James Tissot. Mrs. Wrightsman has also managed to hold on to four superb Canalettos, which hang in her entrance hallway.

CBS's founder, William Paley, and his second wife, Babe, pooled the talents of top decorators including Billy Baldwin, Stéphane Boudin, and Parish Hadley to make their twenty-two-room ninth- and tenth-floor duplex at 820 a spectacular setting for the superb art collection that the Museum of Modern Art plans to exhibit in early 1992.

The Paley pad—complete with Central Park Zoo view—is now available to anyone with about $12 million. The adorning of the walls will be a hard act to follow. Not only would the new occupant be competing with the memories of masterworks by Gauguin, Bonnard, Picasso, and van Gogh that once hung on the living room's paneled walls (Renzo Mongiardino changed Parish Hadley's lemon yellow glaze to a delicate apricot highlighted with gilt stencil, and Paley finally had it changed to white); the newcomer would surely also get some very stiff competition from his neighbors in the building.

One relative newcomer, who moved there within the last two years, *has* kept up with the Gettys et al. He is the chairman and chief auctioneer of Sotheby's North America himself—John Marion—who with his second wife, the Tandy (Radio Shack) heiress Anne Windfohr Marion, chose 820 for their New York pied-à-terre. It is positively packed with Picassos.

—Carlos Rosas

SCOTT HEISER

Acquiring Minds . . .

WANT TO OWN

CHRISTOPHER FORBES, *vice-chairman, Forbes magazine*

"I was on vacation in Bermuda in 1969 and bought Graham Reynolds's book *Victorian Painting*. Back then there was only one other book on this ignored genre, Jeremy Maas's *Victorian Painters*. Both books fired my imagination. I got the magazine started on collecting Victorian painting—that is, once I was able to persuade my father that we could assemble the best collection of Victorian pictures on this side of the Atlantic for the price he paid for a relatively unimportant Monet that hung in his office."

NAN KEMPNER, *socialite*

"I'm devoted to my porcelain birds. I started collecting them when I was first married and living in London in the late fifties and had some wedding-present money. The late Mr. Weinberg of the Antique Porcelain company took a great shine to me back then and taught me everything I know about porcelain. Once at the Grosvenor House Antiques Fair I asked about a pair of gorgeous birds, and the nice young man working the stand quoted seven thousand pounds. I had my checkbook out when, rather red-faced, he said in a very grave tone of voice, 'Madam, I forgot a naught. But I've quoted a price and I am forced to honor that.' He meant he had forgotten a zero, so the birds were really seventy thousand pounds! Of course, I didn't hold the man to his word; it would have been so cruel. I gag at the prices asked for fine birds now. 'The spirit is willing but the pocketbook isn't.' Still, I would love a good pair of eighteenth-century Chinese Export cranes—say, Kangxi or Qianlong. Either period would make me very happy."

—*Compiled by Carlos Rosas*

FORBES/KEMPNER: MARINA GARNIER

SHOWS AND FAIRS

Grosvenor House Antiques Fair

The theme of this year's annual Grosvenor House Antiques Fair, in London, is "The Art and Influence of Japan." Perhaps a more fitting one would be "Bad times make good bargains."

By Leon Harris

THE POINT OF WORLD-CLASS antiques fairs is not to benefit some worthy charity or to elevate attendees with scholarly lectures, nor do they represent a patriotic effort to increase tourism or demonstrate the cultural richness of Western civilization. This is all blather. Antiques dealers at the Grosvenor House Antiques Fair, in London—as well as at others in Paris, New York, and Florence—go to the very considerable expense of exhibiting their wares for one reason only: to make money.

And a lot of money it is, too. Although dealers are as secretive as Soviet spies, the British Antique Dealers' Association estimates that some 20,000 visitors came to last year's Grosvenor fair, spending some $70,000,000. Despite the threat of international terrorism, there will be ninety-four dealers, not all of them British, at this year's Grosvenor, from June 12 through June 22; they are all keeping their fingers crossed that attendance will be high enough to keep those dealers dealing.

The most valuable customers of the fair are not the wagons full of glitterati who come every year but those run-of-the-mill multimillionaires and billionaires, usually of non-Western nationality, who not so inadvertently remind us of our unfavorable balance of trade. In the late seventies and early eighties, oil-rich Arabs were the fair's preferred

Fair Maiden: Ivana Trump headed straight for Grosvenor when Donald decamped last year.

Left: **An English ebony octant, 1821, used for observing altitudes of a celestial body from a moving ship.** ***Above:*** **Gold, diamond, and sapphire cuff links, ca. 1899–1908, by Carl Fabergé.**

customers. But, as we all know, the Japanese have been the favorite fat cats for the last five years or so. It should come as a surprise to no one, therefore, that this year—with oil wells burning out of control in Kuwait and other Arab countries paying massive debts to American arms manufacturers—the theme of the Grosvenor is "The Art and Influence of Japan," a nod to a culture that has produced some of the world's finest paintings, prints, ceramics, and sculpture. Need we also add that it is perhaps not entirely coincidental that at this moment Japan has the deepest pockets, both private and corporate, in the world?

With an economic downturn affecting most sectors of the economy, there will be plenty of "bargains" at Grosvenor 1991. As Richard Knight, managing director of the 231-year-old P. & D. Colnaghi & Co. Ltd., explains, "We have an expensive building on Old Bond Street with fifteen employees and hundreds of paintings, so, like any other serious business, we must maintain our cash flow. Therefore, as recession makes necessary, we will be flexible with our prices, and so will every important dealer at the Grosvenor." In other words, once you have been told the purported price of an object that you want to buy, it is up to you to reduce it as much as you can.

Every exhibitor at this year's fair who was asked about his prices said that he was prepared to accept much lower offers than ever before. But an initiate is advised to tread gingerly when bargaining: as one formerly very snooty dealer warned, "Don't make me a ridiculously low offer unless you are prepared to have it accepted."

THE CONTINUING APPEAL OF ANtiques fairs has much to do with the fact that to visit all the shops that exhibit at the Grosvenor would take months of traveling through England, the Continent, and America; the fair gives you a chance to see each dealer's best things in just a few days. With the thousands of dollars that fairs charge exhibitors for a booth, plus transportation and insurance and flowers, you can be sure that dealers are bringing only their most desirable stuff to tempt you to part with your money.

Ever since the duke of Kent opened the first Grosvenor, in 1935, royals, nobles, and the swells that swarm around them have been in oversupply at the fair: in recent years the duke of Beaufort, the duchess of Marlborough, the duchess of York, and the earl Spencer and Countess Spencer (Princess Di's parents) have been spotted surveying the purveyors. Other sophisticated and wealthy collectors could be seen: not only international society figures such as the Mellons, Baron Thyssen-Borne-

Right: **A Chinese porcelain blue and white saucer dish, ca. 1410, 12⅝" in diameter.**

Putting on the Dog: *Above:* A basset hound eyeing a rare French steel and brass dog's bed, ca. 1800.

misza, and the prince and princess Pignatelli but also heavy hitters of business such as Alfred Taubman, Mohammed al-Fayed, Estée Lauder, the Gutfreunds, Alessandra di Portanova, and flocks of Ferragamos.

Taking its cue from the oh-so-social antiques fairs at New York's Armory and Paris's Biennale des Antiquaires, the Grosvenor again this year is having a charity preview evening, on June 13, between 6:00 P.M. and 9:00 P.M., with tickets at $200 a pop. Here, well-heeled consumers—in addition to getting a chance to skim off the cream of what is shown—take advantage of the opportunity to display their exquisite taste and deal-making acumen to the world. Among some of the celebrities expected at the dinner this year are Joan Collins, Ivana Trump, Dustin Hoffman, Linda Evans, Steve Martin, Rudolf Nureyev, Michael Caine, Jane Seymour, and Elton John. Given this year's economic climate, culture cowboys may be slower to draw their checkbooks than they used to be.

THE VARIETY OF THINGS OFFERED at the Grosvenor is astonishing—furniture, silver, Oriental art, carpets, tapestries, sculptures, paintings, drawings, prints, antiquities, jewelry, books, coins, and clocks. Hard as it is to remember today, the Brits were for two centuries among the richest people on the planet, and (as the Japanese do now) they roamed the world buying whatever pleased them. As tastes change and divorce, death, and taxes take their toll, English homes continue to disgorge these objects: not just English but Italian, French, Islamic, Indian, Oriental, African, Egyptian, medieval—the list is almost endless. This season promises to be just as exciting as ever.

Year after year, Mallett at Bourdon House, Ltd.—not to be confused with its staid, even stodgy, brother, Mallett of Bond Street—offers the fair's most eclectic and even kinky selections, in addition to its more traditional six- and seven-figure treasures. Bourdon House was once the home of the richest man in England, the extraordinary Bendor, second duke of Westminster. The most remarkable object in the duke's collection was his mistress, Coco Chanel. Mallett cannot quite equal that, of course, but if you have a dog of the appropriate size who has a taste for French antiques, you may want to snap up the nineteenth-century steel and silk, twenty-six-inch-long Empire daybed offered for $17,000.

There are not many stores that have been open for business for more than 300 years, but London's Spink & Son, founded in 1666, still thrives. It has survived and prospered by adapting to what the art market offered and what collectors wanted, from Oriental treasures to nineteenth-century paperweights, military medals, and vintage haute couture gowns. At the fair, Spink will offer, at $150,000, a rare eighteenth-century pair of Japanese bodhisattvas (Buddhist guardian deities), one riding an elephant and the other, a lion.

Hanging a work of art on the wall is less fun for some collectors than wearing it. For such folk, Asprey in London is offering a collection of cuff links, brooches, lockets, and pendants by Carl Fabergé. These display the same sort of elegant opulence and meticulous craftsmanship as the late Malcolm Forbes's multimillion-dollar collection of Fabergé's imperial Easter eggs but with prices that are not staggering: $10,000 to $20,000 each.

Or, you can wear a piece of history. Garrard & Co., the British crown jeweler, is offering, at $45,000, a gold and enamel miniature portrait of George III given to an admirer by the king in 1793. You can spend sixty times as much, over $2.5 million, for a Garrard emerald and diamond necklace that has not a fraction of the style of the George III piece. Garrard was especially famous as a maker of trophies (including the America's Cup, in 1848), and some of these come on the market when the winner's heirs run out of luck. At the fair, Garrard will offer several, including a $75,000 horse-race trophy with Queen Victoria in the saddle; Diana she

A pair of mideighteenth-century Chippendale carved gilt wood armchairs flanking a late-seventeenth-century French surgeon's saw.

is not.

Collectors of textiles, once a tiny group, are increasing in number—with the inevitable result of higher prices. Textiles range from Oriental rugs to jeweled church vestments and twentieth-century haute couture dresses.

Among the world's top dealers in textiles is Michael Franses, owner of the Textile Gallery, in London, who explains, "Throughout history, for many different peoples all around the globe—Central Asian tribesmen, Navaho blanket weavers, Pennsylvania quilt makers—textiles were the ultimate cultural expression. Their designs and techniques were passed on, generation after generation.

"At the Grosvenor, our masterpiece will be an eighteenth-century Japanese silk rug. Outside Japan there is not one of these in any public or private collection, so we are asking a quarter of a million dollars, although we bought it at public auction for much less, from a world-famous auctioneer who, as usual, did not know what it was and so described it incorrectly."

On a less astronomical price level, London's Arthur Davidson again this year offers some fascinating instruments and useful objects from earlier centuries and at modest prices. A seventeenth-century steel and ebony surgeon's saw, at $4,000, would make a great gift for your doctor—if you dare. For a sailing friend, there is an 1821 English brass and ebony octant (first cousin to a sextant) for $3,500. But perhaps most surprising of all, at $7,500, is a seventeenth-century German *trousse,* a bone and brass knife-and-forks set in a leather case, a vestige of the days when you carried your own utensils—unless you wanted to eat with your fingers.

The opportunities are as endless at Grosvenor as ever. But if you are feeling a bit hesitant this year, remember Horace's exhortation *"Carpe diem!"* (Seize the day!) Whether your seizable opportunity is in sextants or Sèvres, once missed, it is gone forever. So, if you want to experience an orgasm of Anglophilia, to savor superb antiques, to relish works of art and make them your own, you must be at London's Grosvenor House, in Park Lane, June 12 to 22. And remember: the Grosvenor House hotel's bedrooms, upstairs, will accommodate you after your spree. □

the ear

BY RICHARD JOHNSON

RAMBO PLAYS CUPID

SYLVESTER STALLONE played Cupid, and he didn't even know it. He sued his former art consultant, **BARBARA GUGGENHEIM,** forcing her to hire a lawyer. She picked **BERT FIELDS.** They fell in love. The wedding was in February.

Stallone's multimillion-dollar suit claimed that Guggenheim had steered the film actor into buying *Pietà,* by Adolphe-William Bouguereau, the late-nineteenth-century French painter. The price was $1.7 million. The seller was **STUART PIVAR,** a well-known art collector, who also happened to be Guggenheim's romantic interest at the time.

After Stallone tried to sell the painting through another dealer—a rival of Pivar—it received a poor bill of health from an appraiser, who said that the painting was not worth what he had paid for it. (It supposedly had been ripped and later restored, earlier in its history.) Had Rocky been had by his art adviser's boyfriend? Pivar, who was also named in the suit, claims the appraisal was dead wrong and that the painting was never slashed. Nonetheless, to settle the matter, he was willing to exchange *Pietà* for another Bouguereau. That effectively settled the suit, just in time for Guggenheim's wedding to her lawyer, who happens to be one of Hollywood's top entertainment attorneys, with clients such as Dustin Hoffman and Warren Beatty. (The vows were taken at Fields's West Hollywood home and were followed by a party thrown by the CAA head Michael Ovitz.)

The biggest loser in the whole affair was Stuart Pivar, but it was an emotional loss, not a legal or financial setback. Pivar is still carrying the torch for Barbara, rueing the day she ever needed a lawyer in the first place.

CORPORATE PUNISHMENT

If the business minds who ran the S&Ls into the ground were geniuses, maybe they'd still be in business. Now we're seeing just how bad their judgment was, not only in real-estate deals but in art as well.

Vast collections of what was classified as "art" are being auctioned off across the country, as the Resolution Trust Corporation, a federal-government corporation with operations overseen by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, tries to recoup the government's trillion-dollar losses.

Barbara Guggenheim and Sylvester Stallone gallery-hopping.

But forget about putting a dent in the national debt: the museum-quality works were few and far between. True, Centrust, in Miami, had Rubens's *Mars* in its collection, which sold at fire-sale rates when the bank folded. But the rest is of doctor's-office quality—buy-by-the-yard oil paintings that decorated the S&Ls' office walls, loads of ashtrays, hat stands, planters, and porcelain dogs. First Network Federal Savings, in Los Angeles, even purchased the entire collection of the Mulholland Library of Conjuring and the Allied Arts, a library on magic, for just a fraction of the $139 million the S&L lost before it closed last fall. Maybe the bankers

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the ear

thought they could use some of that magic on their accounting books.

The collections of eight defunct San Antonio S&Ls that went on the block last February give a good indication of the quality of the work. The highest bid, of $18,000, was for a twenty-seven-foot-tall, four-and-a-half-ton bronze sculpture by Victor Contreras. The lowest was $25, for a lithograph by "artist name illegible."

The defunct Seamen's Bank sold off its piggy-bank collection at Christie's.

Perhaps most symbolic of all was a Christie's auction in New York in which a huge collection of antique piggy banks from the Seamen's Bank for Savings (*R.i.p.*) was put on the block. The top price, fetched by the two most elaborate and rare, was $25,300 apiece—further proof that it pays to be a pig. (To be fair, the Seamen's 2,000-piece maritime collection was sold to the South Street Seaport Museum for $3.4 million. But even that sale is being contested. A court challenge alleges that the FDIC failed to put the collection up for competitive bidding. The museum, meanwhile, must wait for the case to be settled before getting its hands on the cache.)

BUGGED BUNNY

Roy Lichtenstein used Mickey and Minnie Mouse; Edward Hopper painted a Mobil sign. And of course there was Andy Warhol, who appropriated Campbell's-soup cans and Brillo soap-pad boxes. Throughout the twentieth century, trademarks have been a staple image for the greats—witness MOMA's much maligned but immensely popular "High and Low" show, last year.

But you won't find the Pop painter **RONNIE CUTRONE**, forty-two, ever trading on a Warner Brothers character again. Over the years, the artist has obtained licenses to use anthropomorphic wonders such as Woody Woodpecker and Felix the Cat but not for Warner Brothers types such as Elmer Fudd, Tweety Bird, and Porky Pig, characters who have popped up in Cutrone's quirky canvases for years. It was not until Cutrone used the image of Bugs Bunny in an unauthorized edition of prints that he got into a nasty legal wrangle with the studio. As part of the settlement, Cutrone has agreed to stay away from the wascally wabbit.

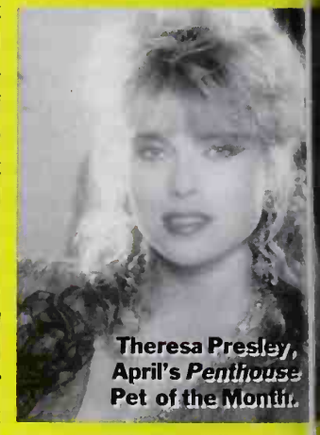
"They threatened to march into museums and go through private collections with razor blades and cut out their characters," Cutrone said. "They also threatened to sue me for $8 million."

Cutrone was willing to go to the mat with Warner Brothers. The artist claims that under the "fair use law" he is allowed to use trademarked one-of-a-kind images in paintings: "Any artist has the right to paint anything in his environment. It probably would have gone all the way to the Supreme Court and I probably would have won. But it would have cost at least $300,000 [in legal fees] to get that far."

Cutrone is developing his own characters now. "I am copyrighting three of them. I am sick and tired of Bugs anyway. I couldn't do another. I hate him."

PET OBSESSION

Calling all art dealers. The April *Penthouse* Pet of the Month, **THERESA PRESLEY,** is quoted as saying, "I'd like to sneak into an exclusive New York art gallery after hours and explore erotic boundaries with the man of my dreams as the masters of the art world hang around me."



Theresa Presley, April's *Penthouse* Pet of the Month.

MORT'S AMOURS

The *U.S. News & World Report* chairman and editor in chief **MORT ZUCKERMAN** is an art collector, and he is also one of the world's most eligible bachelors. So, it is hard to tell if the attractive art dealer **DR. PHYLLIS HADDAS** is interested more in his collection or in his affection. The good doctor (of fine art) has been in constant touch with the real-estate developer–publisher. The Ear hears she was faxing him on an almost daily basis while he was wintering in Aspen with the *Vanity Fair* editor-at-large **SARAH GILES.** A source who read one fax said, "It was like a love letter. She said she was dreaming of their being together." One can only wonder what William Rubin, Haddis's longtime companion and the director emeritus of the Department of Painting and Sculpture at MOMA, is thinking. □

LEFT: COURTESY CHRISTIE'S NEW YORK

CHARLES BECKER

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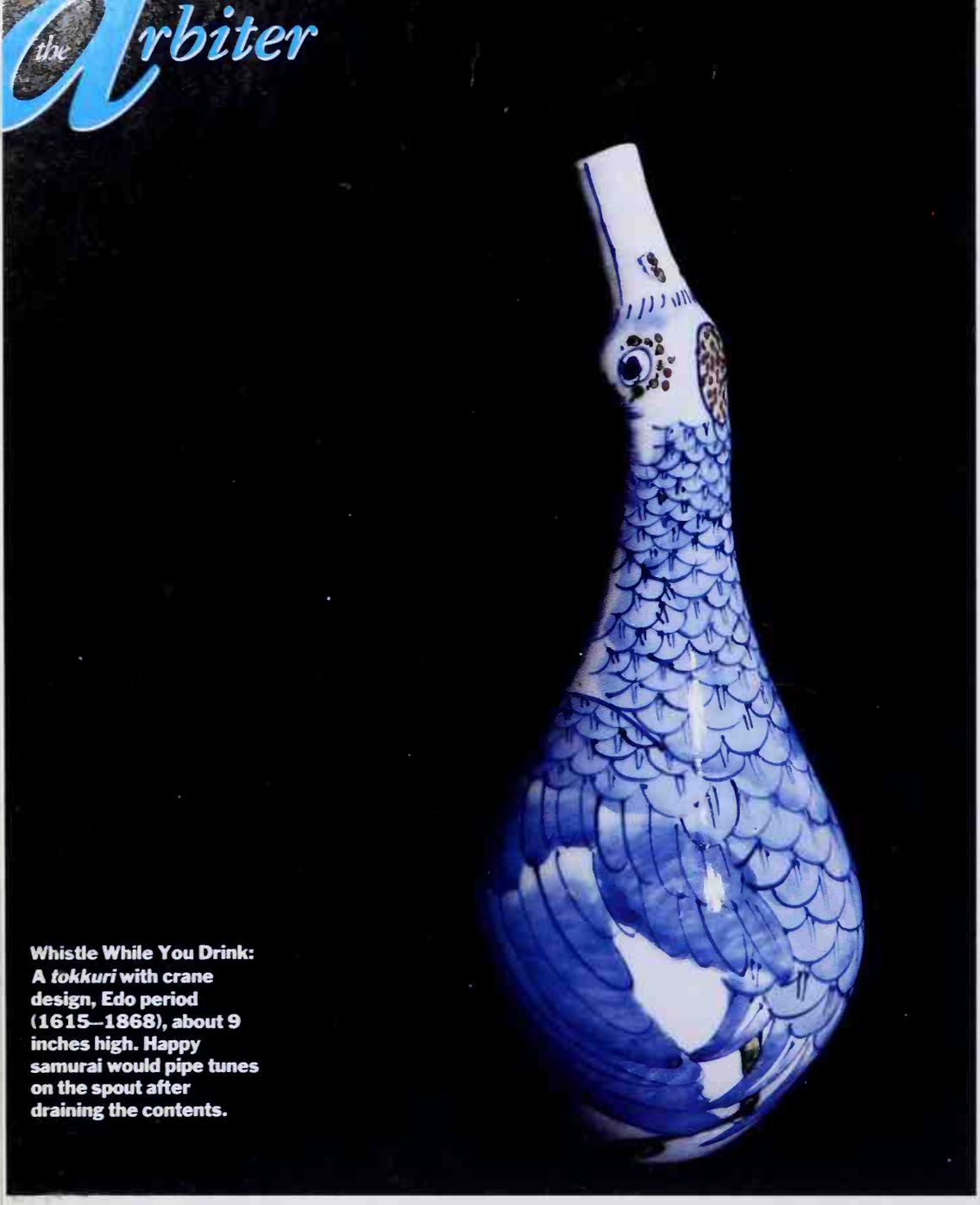


Whistle While You Drink: A *tokkuri* with crane design, Edo period (1615–1868), about 9 inches high. Happy samurai would pipe tunes on the spout after draining the contents.

THE COCKTAIL HOUR

Subtleties of Sake

Sake, Japan's "drink of the gods," is gaining favor in the United States, where people are discovering its multiplicity of transcendent tastes and rituals.

By Joni Miller

AEONS AGO, ACCORDING TO JAPANESE lore, the princess Kushinada was taken captive by the Great Serpent of Yamata Lake. It is said that when Susanoonomikoto, the brother of the sun goddess, learned of the princess's plight, he came up with a brilliant plan to save her: he brewed huge vats of rice wine with which to entice the mammoth reptile. Of course, the serpent loved the brew, and once the enemy had overindulged it was swiftly dispatched with a magical sword.

For centuries "the drink of the gods" in Japan, sake is quietly achieving its own cult status in the United States. As it does, Americans are beginning to realize that there is far more to this graceful rice wine than is suggested by the mundane (although perfectly adequate) "house" varieties partaken of at the 3,000-plus Japanese restaurants that have sprung up in this country in the past decade or so. Translucently clean and deceptively simple in taste and appearance, sake is *the* drink to explore in the nineties, its various permutations (including some versions brewed right here in this country) proving that this Oriental potable can compete with any fine French wine for complexity and refinement.

As with most things Japanese, the appreciation of sake—a clear or amber-tinted wine concocted of rice and water—is a study in the complex art of simplicity, the aesthetics of the everyday, and the incorporation of refinement and ritual into the seemingly commonplace. Its origins are as humble and indigenous as the rice fields it evolved from. The first sakes in ancient Japan were known as "chewing in the mouth" ones, so called because they were made from rice that had been chewed and spat into wooden tubs, in which the saliva acted as a fermentation agent as the mash aged. Throughout the millennia in Japan, special occasions—the beginning of cherry-blossom season, the dedication of a new building, and the celebration of a marriage—have been consecrated with the best sakes. The most highly desirable of these was called *bijinshu,* or "beautiful woman sake," in reference to the young virgins who chewed the rice kernels. Another ancient version, *kikuzaké,* or "chrysanthemum sake," was purportedly named after the water used to make it, drawn from a river on the day chrysanthemum blossoms were at the peak of their beauty, just after they had deposited their morning dew into the currents.

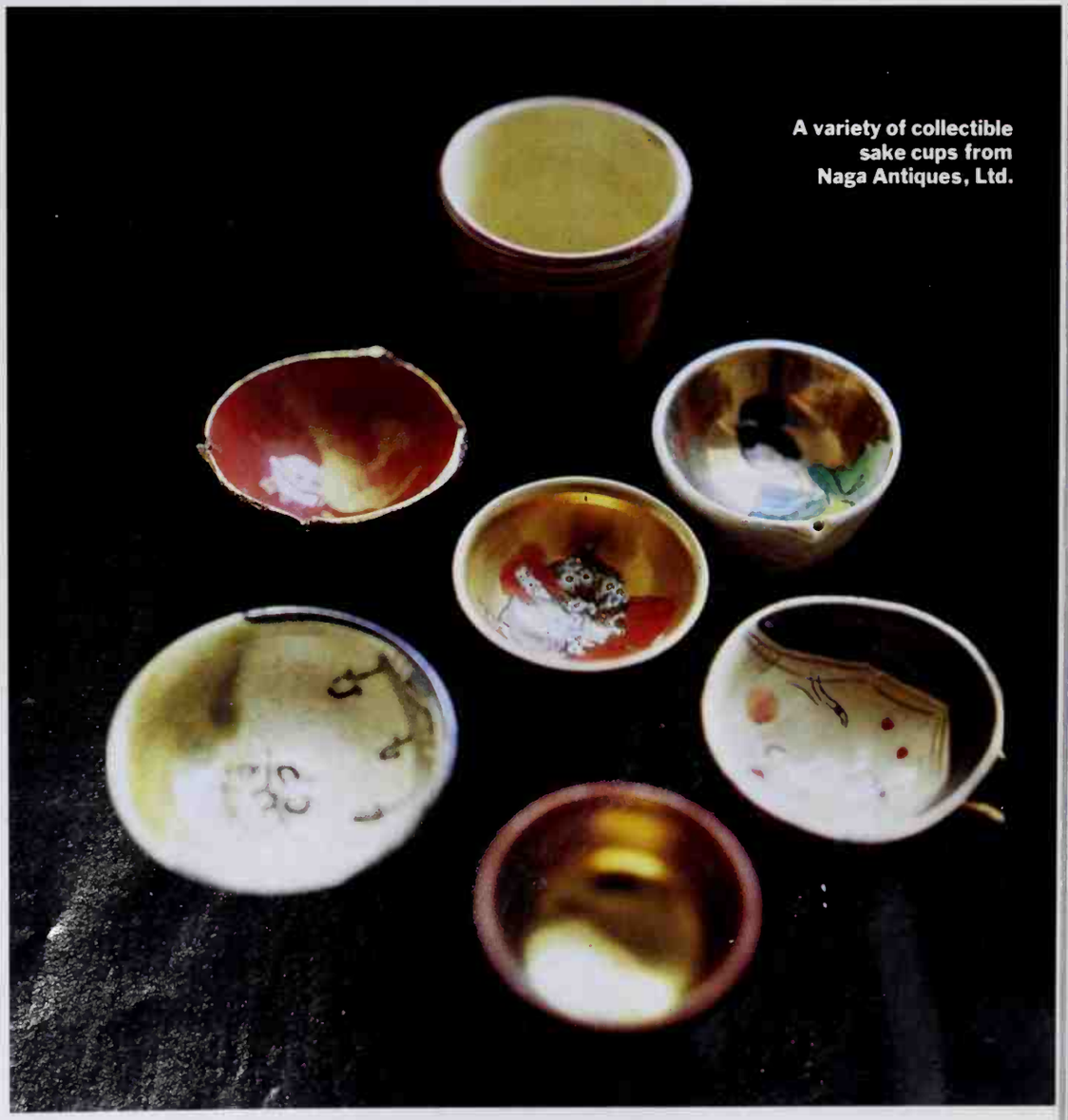
Today, water and finely ground short-grain Japonica rice remain sake's essential ingredients. In the production process, polished rice is soaked, steamed, fermented, pressed, clarified, aged, and pasteurized. And although in Japan there are categories of sake in which alcohol, sugar, or other ingredients may be added to the brew, by law all sake imported into the United States is *junmai-shu*, or pure rice sake, a ver-

sion most akin to the ancient sakes and one that has an alcohol content of around 16 percent (slightly higher than that of other wines, which lie in the 11 to 14 percent range). In contrast to the 5,000 or so sakes available in Japan, the sakes in most American liquor stores remain of limited range, though with public curiosity on the upswing their stocks are gradually growing more sophisticated. Consumers with a keen interest seek out wider selections at Japanese specialty stores, such as Yaohan Plaza, a chain with branches in California and New Jersey. Among Japanese imports, reliable brands to look out for include Harushika (a very dry sake from Nara, one of the great brewing regions), Gekkeikan (widely available, full-bodied), and Shirayuki (prized by connoisseurs for its complex palate).

Imports, however, make up only half of the U.S. sake saga. In the past decade, California (where sake consumption is highest) has become the site of a handful of large Japanese-owned breweries that have been quietly producing more sake in the States than is being imported here from Japan. Very drinkable and on the light, dry side, these domestic versions are brewed with the same techniques used in Japan. The brewers include Ozeki Sake USA (a subsidiary of Japan's third-largest brewer); American Pacific Rim, with its California Ki-Ippon; Kohnan, in the Napa Valley, which brews Hakusan; and Berkeley-based Takara Sake USA, the largest producer, which sells under the brand name Sho Chiku Bai. One wonders, can Sonoma sake be far behind?

The semantics of tasting sake, the art of describing its appearance, flavor, and smell, are lyrically appropriate to the subject. There are hundreds of terms for expressing its range of tastes and smells, from *koshi ga aru* (a sumo wrestling term meaning "to have strong hips"), which is used to describe a certain pleasant heaviness, to *kime ga komakai* ("finely detailed") and *kirei* ("clean")—positive characterizations of lightness. A superior sake will flow down the throat softly and smoothly, "like drinking water," and its taste will linger on the palate. This all-important aftertaste, which incorporates the overall impression left by a sake, is characterized as having a tail, or *shiripin*. Age is not revered in rice wines, and, because of a short shelf life and vulnerability to heat and light, most sakes are best drunk young (less than a year old) and quickly after opening (before oxidation begins and flavor deteriorates). A sake that has been aged for precisely the correct amount of time may be referred to as *chōwa ga aru* ("to have harmony") or *shitazawari nameraka* ("to have a gentle touch on the tongue"). Relative dryness or sweetness is noted in terms of a sake's body. A full-bodied sake with a rich texture and flavor may be said to have "meat" (*niku ga aru*) or "range" (*haba ga aru*), while one that is too heavy, with an overabundance of body, is called *shitsukoi* ("cloying") or *kudoi* ("garrulous"). Even when the pronouncement is negative, the poetry remains. *Sabishii,* an ancient term meaning "lonely and sad," denotes the absence of complex taste; it also is applied to the forlorn mental state of a woman left waiting for a lover who does not show up for a rendezvous.

PERHAPS NO ONE ON EITHER COAST IS so passionately involved in promoting the pleasures and proprieties of sake drinking as the American businessman and Japanophile Scott Latham. Several years ago, in partnership with the Japanese entrepreneur Akio Umeda and the chef Norihiro Miyake, Latham opened Umeda, one of Manhattan's most refined Japanese restaurants. Latham's informed yet unpedantic crusade to codify the delights of savoring sake is realized daily at Umeda's Douglas-fir sake-tasting bar. Here, a constantly changing selection of eighteen or so types of sake (including famous Japanese national brands as well as less well known regional brews, plus one or two American-produced ones) is culled from among the more than 5,000 varieties available in Japan. With names like



A variety of collectible sake cups from Naga Antiques, Ltd.

"Plum Brocade," "White Snow," and "Young Bamboo Dragon Slayer," these are a far cry from the "jug" sake most Westerners have experienced. Umeda's separate sake menu does not assume literacy; it has been designed as a sort of mini-tutorial and geography lesson, providing English explanations of each offering's flavor and origin, along with a code corresponding to its relative sweetness (up to minus 15) or dryness (plus 15, maximum). In recent years, both here and in Japan, there has been a trend toward drier, lighter sakes that lean toward the plus side of the scale. Latham is realistic about educating Western palates, a process that starts with the nitty-gritty of correct pronunciation. "Teaching people it's pronounced *sah-kay*, not *sah-kee*," he wryly admits, "is half the battle." The other half, without question, is the more challenging: addressing the litany of sake fallacies that persist in the West despite sake's burgeoning popularity here.

Contrary to popular belief, Latham says, the best way to drink sake is not when it is piping-hot; overheating devastates its true flavor and character. Therefore, a small pitcher of sake that arrives at one's table too hot to handle is a signal that the contents' true flavor and aroma will have been distorted beyond recognition. Different sakes are served at different temperatures. Most are best served at room, or "skin," temperature; some, slightly chilled; while others profit from gentle warming to bring out their bouquet. Most bottle labels will note a recommended temperature; sake cognoscenti try to match their choice to the season, being more likely to drink warmed sake in the wintertime.

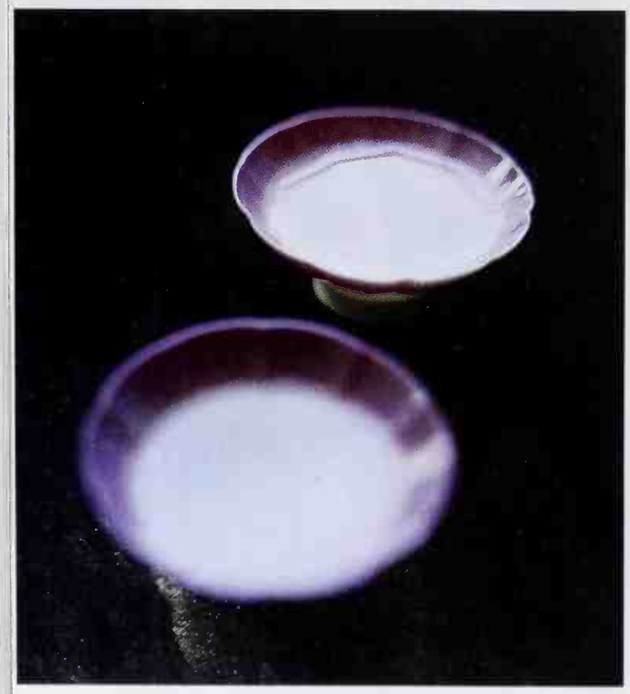
Which serving and drinking vessels to choose from is largely predicated on the temperature at which the wine is being served. For example, most gently warmed sake is poured from a small, pinch-necked ceramic pitcher or bottle, known as a *tokkuri*, into minuscule cups, known as *sakazuki*, whereas a cooled or chilled sake may be drunk from small glasses of the size used for cordials or vodka. A more rustic, informal vessel for sake served slightly cooled or at room temperature is the *masu*, a small square cedar box; *masu* are traditionally filled until the liquor pours over the sides, a signal that the customer has been given a full measure of value. Coarse salt is sometimes sprinkled on the rim of one corner of the box, tequila style.

According to *Saké: A Drinker's Guide*, by Hiroshi Kondō, the Japanese perceive sake as "liquid rice," and "because sake and rice are so closely related they do not appear on the table together." The proper partner is *sakana* (the cuisine of sake, or "things you eat with sake"), or *otsumami*, a progression of hors d'oeuvre–like delicacies such as eggplant with miso sauce or marinated octopus, assembled to complement and enhance enjoyment of the wine's flavor. Sake is also an integral element in *kaiseki*, an exquisite, multicourse meal that is part of the tea ceremony.

Sake drinking in Japan is revered for its convivial, communal aspect; the ritual that surrounds it is based on a prescribed code of politeness and partnership. There are carefully defined positions for holding the tiny cup and the *tokkuri* and for indicating that one has reached the outer limits of one's ability to continue drinking. According to Kondō, "This tiny ritual, repeated countless times over the course of an evening, can be a reaffirmation of an old friendship or the beginning of a new one, but it always implies a relationship, at least for that moment."

After more than 2,000 years as the national drink of Japan, sake has finally achieved its moment in the West. Its allure lies not only in the extraordinary dual sensuality of its taste and texture but also in the delicious reverberations of the ancient origins of the wine as "the drink of the gods" and "the jeweled broom that sweeps away all cares." The liquid embodiment of Japanese ideals of beauty and refinement is ours for the drinking, in each lingering sip of "Fine Bamboo Plum." □

Two of a set of five Seto fine porcelain morning-glory cups from the 1930s.



Bowled Over

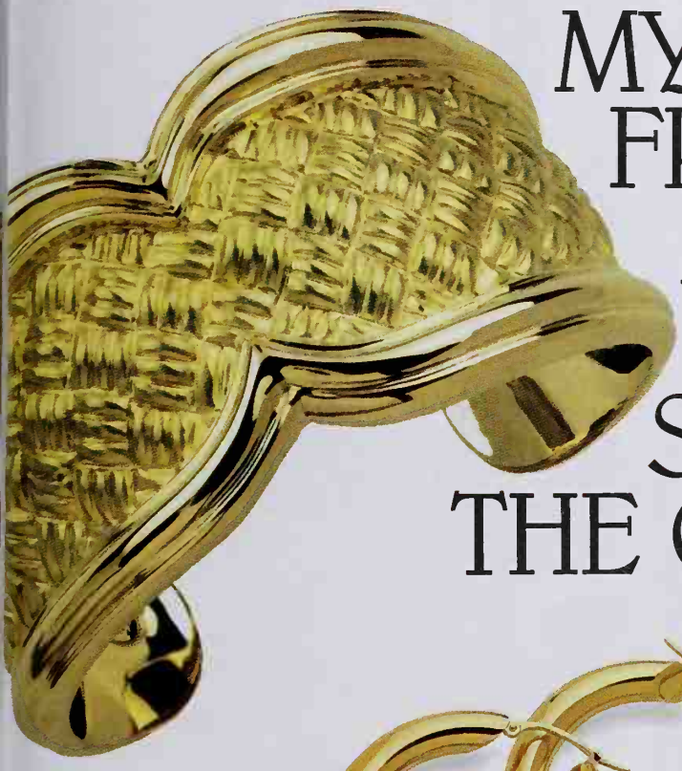
Ceramics is an ancient and glorious art in Japan, and sake-drinking vessels display the extraordinary range of the potter's craft as it was practiced in the ancient kilns of Seto, Tokoname, Bizen, Echizen, and Shigaraki.

The nearly religious belief in beauty that imbues even the most mundane facets of Japanese life is evident in these simple artifacts. It is not unusual to find museum-quality antique ceramics being used at expensive restaurants in Kyoto or Tokyo. But such items are harder to find even in American galleries and museums that specialize in Japanese antiquities.

Several examples, however, may be seen in the private and comprehensive Mary and Jackson Burke Collection, in New York, including a graceful crane-shaped blue and white porcelain *tokkuri* (sake bottle) attributed to the Edo period. At the Freer Gallery of Art, at the Smithsonian Institution, in Washington, D.C., a collection of primarily seventeenth-to-twentieth-century Japanese ceramics includes a rare, gourd-shaped sixteenth-century Shino *tokkuri* from the Mino kiln, near Nagoya.

At Naga Antiques, Ltd., also in New York, Marilyn Marinaccio takes special pleasure in her personal collection of twenty-five sake cups culled from "dusty little shops" that she and her husband, James, have visited on buying trips to Japan for their gallery. It includes not only exquisite earthenware and porcelain examples (like the morning-glory cups shown here) but also a few items that reflect the puckish sense of humor that occasionally surfaces in Japanese design—among them, vessels with whistles built into their necks so that happy samurai may express their contentment at the end of particularly convivial evenings of sake sipping.

"MY SHOES COME FROM ITALY, MY BLOUSES FROM FRANCE, AND MY JEWELRY FROM LITTLE SWITZERLAND IN THE CARIBBEAN."



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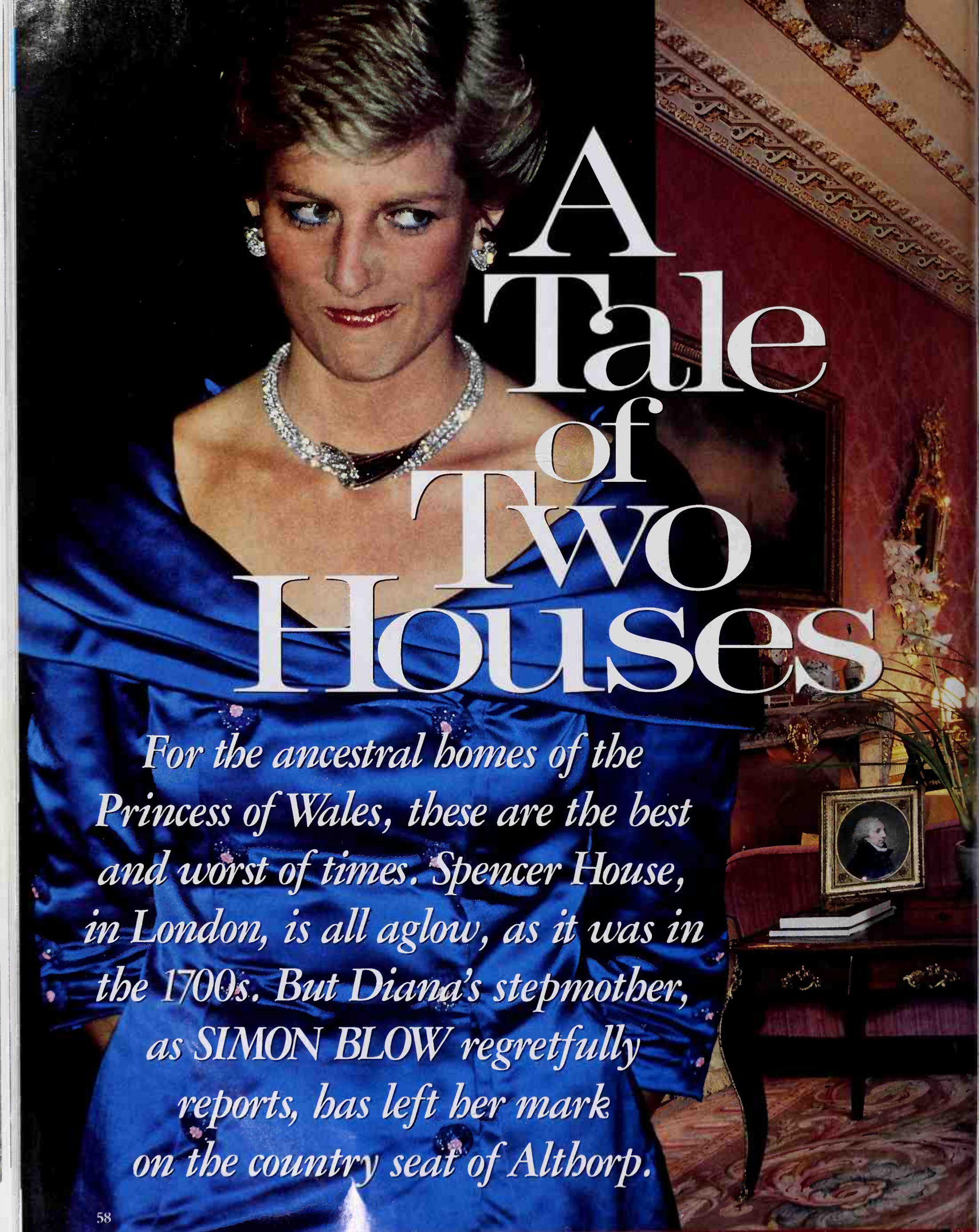


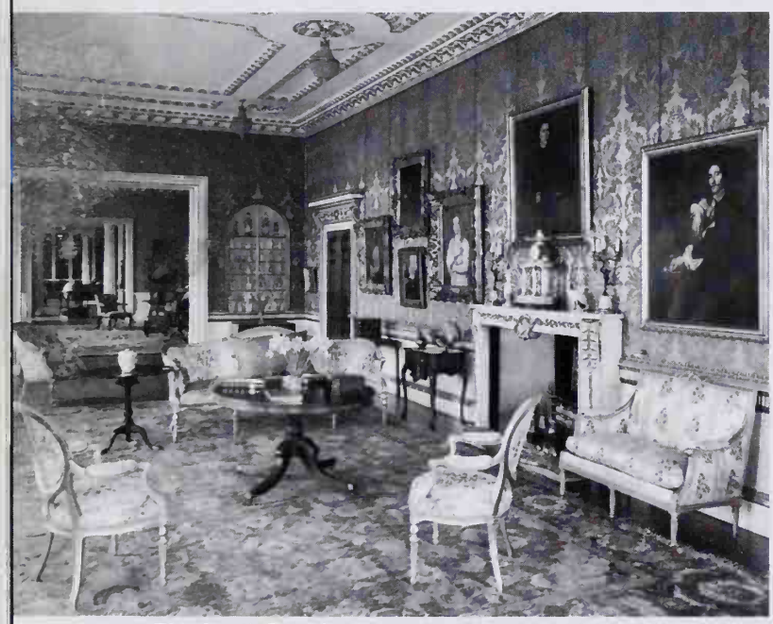
A Tale of Two Houses

For the ancestral homes of the Princess of Wales, these are the best and worst of times. Spencer House, in London, is all aglow, as it was in the 1700s. But Diana's stepmother, as SIMON BLOW regretfully reports, has left her mark on the country seat of Althorp.

Gilt Complex: The South Drawing Room at Althorp after the 1980s redecoration by Raine Spencer. The green damask, originally from Spencer House, was replaced and the severely depleted paintings collection rehung. The result: smart-hotel comfort instead of historical accuracy.

At the country estate of Althorp, in Northamptonshire, two hours north of London, you will find a genial old chap in the "wine shop," eager to advise you on your choice of beverage. He speaks slowly, a beaming smile fixed on his face—the visible remains of a stroke. Later he will go back to his mansion, gaze at the television set, and resume his torpid life as an earl. In another shop on the grounds, this one filled with amusement-park gewgaws for sale, you will find a Lady, rather heavily painted, with a ready smile, her crimson lips spreading in affected tenderness.

This is the genial earl's second wife, who, armed with that smile, has set English society on its collective ear by her extensive dispersal of the earl's family treasures. Her husband is John (Johnnie), the sixty-seven-year-old eighth Earl Spencer, father by his first marriage of Diana, Princess of Wales; grandfather of a future king of England; and, by inheritance, custodian of the house that once held one of the finest private collections of art and furnishings in the land. It has, in fact, been referred to as "the product of three centuries of enlightened taste."



The South Drawing Room at Althorp in 1960, with Spencer House dado (from the Great Room), doorcase (from Lady Spencer's Room), and new "Pavia" green damask on walls.

It is no longer either of those things, for the simple reason that the earl's second wife, Raine, sixty-one, decided, shortly after their marriage, that Althorp needed "restoring." Toward that end, she raised millions through the sale of pictures, silver, archives, and china, much of which had been in the Spencer family for centuries. The results have not gone uncommented upon by the heirs. It is rumored that Johnnie Spencer's son and Diana's brother, the twenty-seven-year-old Charles Viscount Althorp, wrote to his stepmother that he looked forward to coming back to Althorp—if there was anything left.

"WHY ON EARTH HAS JOHNNIE LET Raine do this?" bewildered friends and acquaintances ask. And why has she taken to her task with such vigor? The questions are brought up with increasing frequency, now that the National Gallery chairman Jacob Rothschild has leased Spencer House, in London, the family's other ancestral home, and has done such a splendid job of restoring it. To know the answers is to know Raine Spencer.

Before she married the eighth earl, in 1976, when fifteen-year-old Diana was just a student at the West Heath School, about 100 miles away in Kent, she was the countess of Dartmouth, with a house in Mayfair, London's smartest district, but no country seat. During her first marriage, as Mrs. Gerald Legge, as the viscountess Lewisham, and ultimately—when her husband succeeded to the title earl of Dartmouth—as countess, Raine was rarely out of the limelight.

Perhaps it runs in the family. Her mother is Barbara Cartland, the romance novelist, now close to ninety, who lists in *Who's Who* over five hundred titles, such as *Love Me for Ever, Wings of Ecstasy, A Virgin in Paris,* and *The Odious Duke.* Feeding somewhat simpleminded fantasies to starved imaginations, she has become and remains the world's best-selling general-fiction author, according to *The Guinness Book of World Records,* with sales of more than half a billion copies worldwide. Her personal style has been widely documented in photographs that show her sitting and writing in bed, as is her custom, wearing frilly pink bed jackets and finely coiffed bouffant hair.

While Barbara Cartland supplies romance to the masses, her only child has made her name seeking romance of a different sort, protesting the tawdriness of modern life. In the 1950s, Raine became a conservative councillor for the borough of Westminster. At that time, she shook up Heathrow Airport by finding and reporting such outrages there as unemptied ashtrays and staff rudeness. In the late 1960s, she called for a ban on the movie version of James Joyce's *Ulysses.* Denouncing author and film alike, she declared, "I don't see any necessity to see the film. I've read the book and that's enough for me. It's disgusting."

By 1975, she had left Lord Dartmouth and was having a dalliance worthy of a Cartland novel with Johnnie Spencer, who had divorced his first wife in 1969. The Honorable Frances Roche, mother of the four Spencer children, a well-bred woman who had grown tired of her husband, had gone off with Peter Shand-Kydd, a gentleman wallpaper manufacturer, two years earlier.

Since their wedding, Johnnie Spencer has followed Raine like a devoted puppy. "It's got to be sex," one friend has observed. Whatever the basis of their relationship, Raine has always seemed to get what she wants, in this case including track lighting in a 500-year-old home. (A joke among English society goes, "Even when she was a Legge, she wore the trousers.") Only two years after they married, Johnnie Spencer had a severe stroke and nearly died. To Raine's credit, she nursed him lovingly back to health. Some even say that, without her, he would surely have died.

On the other hand, her husband's illness made it even easier for Raine to do just about anything she wished with the family home. She had already begun selling off Spencer family heirlooms; now she could plunge wholeheartedly into one of the glitziest redecorations ever perpetrated upon an English country house. Americans who feel inclined to take this deed lightly might try to imagine an auction of the contents of an intact Monticello or Mount Vernon.

But that is only part of the picture. To understand fully the tragedy of Althorp (and, in part, even of Spencer House, which has also been affected by Althorp's "restoration") requires an appreciation of the English aristocracy's attitude toward ownership and provenance: that you are never more than a tenant in your own house and a transito-

Earl Spencer, the Princess of Wales's father, and his second wife, Raine, at Althorp.

ry guardian of its contents. That philosophy is only an expression of something much larger, the biblical notion that each of us comes into the world with nothing, leaves with nothing, and has something of a moral responsibility to leave things of beauty behind for future generations to enjoy. But it really comes down to something as simple, and as complex, as the relation between people and things.

Diana's brother, Viscount Althorp.

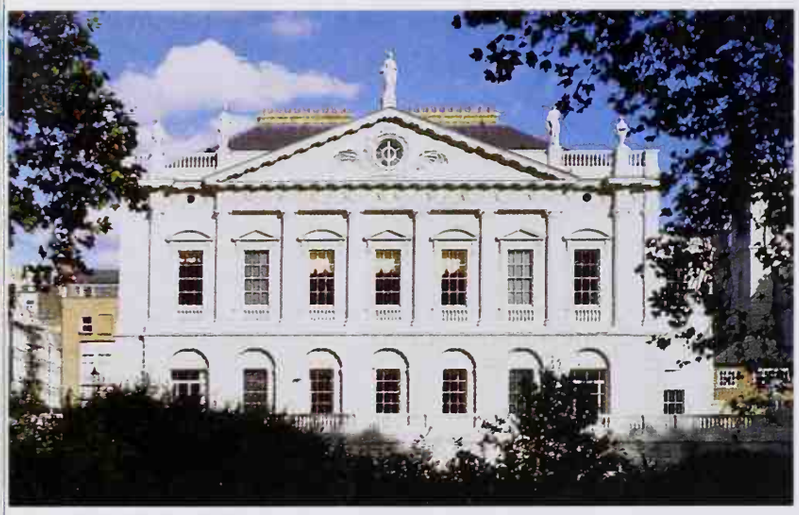
This particular situation also comes down to some clear historical facts. Althorp, in the country, and Spencer House, in London, are the ancestral homes of the Princess of Wales, who—putting aside the issue of international celebrity for the moment—will be the next queen of England. These homes are also the heritage of Prince William, who is expected to succeed his father, Charles, as king.

ALTHORP WOULD HAVE BEEN IMPORtant, however, even if Diana and Charles had never met. The house was built in 1508, a year before Henry VIII ascended the throne. It was surrounded by a moat until 1786, when it was remodeled by Henry Holland and refaced with gray brick.

The Spencer family tree begins with Sir John Spencer, who died in 1522. A little less than two centuries later, the family gained great prestige (it already had great wealth) when the illustrious duke of Marlborough's eldest daughter and heir married into the Spencer family. All the earls of Spencer (as well as

The Princess of Wales's indefatigable stepmother.

As Raine tacks down her wall-to-wall carpeting at Althorp, a restored Spencer House evokes the grandeur of the eighteenth century.



Spencer House, the grandest eighteenth-century mansion left in London, now restored to its old glory.

the dukes of Marlborough) are thus directly descended from Sir Winston Churchill, born in 1620, and from his son, Sir John Churchill, the first duke.

A major military hero in campaigns against Louis XIV, including the famous Battle of Blenheim (1704), the first duke of Marlborough was made captain general of the British armed forces by James II. With his newly exalted position and the government endowment that came with it, Marlborough built what is clearly the grandest of all the English country seats: Blenheim Palace, in Oxfordshire. (Blenheim is now the home of "Sonny," the eleventh duke of Marlborough, former husband of Tina Onassis Niarchos.) A great-grandson of the first duke, John Spencer (1734–83), a nephew of the third duke of Marlborough (the dukes of Marlborough later adopted the surname Spencer-Churchill, which they use today), was made the first Earl Spencer, and it was he who put the most salient mark on Althorp, the original family home. Perhaps the best-loved tale in Althorp lore is of his wedding, which took place secretly upstairs in the Oak Bedroom while his twenty-first birthday party was in full swing downstairs. He had come of age and was wasting no time.

The following year, 1756, he built Spencer House. The family had always lived grandly in the country at Althorp and Blenheim Palace, but it was not until the future first earl got his inheritance that there was real money to throw around in London. It was the fortune of his great-grandmother, Sarah, duchess of Marlborough, who had overseen the construction of Blenheim

Raine Damage: Spencer Family Treasures Disbursed, 1976–90

ARCHIVES AND DRAWINGS

Northamptonshire estate papers, sold to Northampton Record Office, 1986.

Spencer family archives and political papers from the Muniment Room at Althorp, sold to the British Library, 1984, for about £1 million ($1,330,000).

Architectural drawings by Henry Holland et al. for Althorp, sold to Artemis, 1985; bought by the British Library for £26,000 ($33,540).

John Vardy's drawings for Spencer House, sold to Artemis, 1985; now in the J. Paul Getty Museum, California.

Manuscript music from Althorp, sold at Christie's, 1985.

Adriaen Pieters Van de Venne, *Album of 102 Scenes from Contemporary Life*. Acquired by the first Earl Spencer; sold to the British Museum, 1977, for £148,500 ($258,390).

PAINTINGS

Nicholas de Largillière, *Portrait of a Sculptor*. Sold to Colnaghi, 1990.

Salvator Rosa, *The Witches' Sabbath* (Florence, 1640s). Purchased by the first Earl Spencer, 1761; sold to Wildenstein, 1982; bought by the National Gallery, 1984, for £350,000 ($465,500).

Anthony Van Dyck, *Five Apostles—St. Bartholomew, St. James the Greater, St. Simon, St. Matthew, St. Matthias* (1620s, Italy). Sold to Colnaghi.

Anthony Van Dyck, *St. Jerome in Penitence* (1620s, Italy). Oil sketch for the painting in Dresden; sold to Colnaghi, 1982.

Anthony Van Dyck, a portrait of Icarus. Sold to Colnaghi, 1982.

Anthony Van Dyck, four portraits. Transferred to the Treasury, 1976, in payment of Capital Transfer Tax (CTT, formerly known as Death Duties).

Francesco Albani, *Holy Family and Angels*. Inherited from Sarah, duchess of Marlborough; sold to Colnaghi, 1982.

Carlo Dolci, *Marriage of St. Catherine*. Bought by Hon. John Spencer, 1740 (original receipt, now with the dispersed archives in the British Library); sold to Colnaghi, 1982.

Johann Rottenhammer, *Coronation of the Virgin* (on copper). Bought by the second earl of Sunderland; sold to Colnaghi, 1982; bought by the National Gallery for £60,000 (about $79,800).

Hendrik Avercamp, *Scene on Ice*. Collected by the second earl of Sunderland; sold to Harari & Johns, 1982.

Sir Joshua Reynolds, *Angelica Kauffmann*. Original; copy is in the Accademia di San Luca, Rome. Sold to Artemis, 1982.

Giovanni Benedetto Castiglione, *Noah's Sacrifice*. Admired by Horace Walpole in the Althorp Green Drawing Room; sold, 1982; now in L.A. County Museum.

Guido Reni, *Liberality and Modesty*. Acquired by the first Earl Spencer from the Furnese sale, 1758, for Spencer House (frame designed by Athenian Stuart to match Great Room's architecture); sold to Wildenstein (now in the U.S.).

Andrea Sacchi, *Apollo Crowning the Musician Marcantonio Pasqualini*. Acquired by the first Earl Spencer from the Furnese sale,

The Way Up: Staircase at Spencer House, with unique eighteenth-century balustrade by Vardy.

e: The Ante Room at Spencer House before 1986. oday, all modern indignities have been swept away.

Palace while her husband was in exile. John would later be created an earl because of his wealth, his connections, and his proven ability to rig an election—in favor of the Whigs, the political party that stood for constitutional government and liberal ideas—for political bribery was routine in the eighteenth century. But at the time he built his house, he was simply a very young,

1758, as a pair to the Guido Reni for the Great Room at Spencer House (matching frame by Athenian Stuart); sold to Wildenstein for £40,000 (about $53,200); sold on to the Metropolitan Museum, New York, for £270,000 ($359,100).

David Teniers the Younger, *Hermits in a Cave*. Acquired by the second earl of Sunderland; sold by Sotheby's, 1985.

David Teniers the Younger, *The Drowned Leander Borne by Nereids*. One of a series of studies after the Italian pictures in the archduke Leopold's Gallery, Brussels; acquired by the second earl of Sunderland; sold by Sotheby's, 1985.

John Wootton, *The Duchess of Marlborough's Dogs*, 1736. Inherited from Sarah, duchess of Marlborough; sold by Sotheby's, 1985.

John Riley, *Mary, Wife of Sir Richard Spencer*. In original carved and silver frame. Sold by Sotheby's, 1985.

Jacopo da Ponte (called **Jacopo Bassano**), *The Madonna and Child with St. John the Baptist*. In collection of Hon. John Spencer, Althorp. Inherited, 1746, by his son John, the first Earl Spencer; sold by Sotheby's, 1985.

Ippolito Scarsella (called **Lo Scarsellino**), *Christ and the Woman of Samaria*. In collection of Hon. John Spencer. Inherited, 1746, by his son John; sold by Sotheby's, 1985.

Giovanni Francesco Barbieri (called **Il Guercino**), *Two Cherubs in Clouds*. Top of altarpiece sold to Colnaghi, 1982; sold by Sotheby's, 1985.

John Riley, *Portrait of Mary Musters (1635 to 1717), Wife of Sir Richard Spencer of Offley, 2nd Bt., and her son John (1677–78 to 1699) When a Child*. In carved wood, silvered frame. Sold by Sotheby's, 1985.

Stephen Slaughter, *Hon. John Spencer, 1739*. In original frame. Sold by Sotheby's, 1985.

Jean Baptiste Van Loo, *Rt. Hon. Stephen Poyntz*. Bequeathed to Georgiana, Countess Spencer, by the sitter's widow; sold by Sotheby's, 1985.

Studio of Hudson's *Countess Grenville*. In original carved wood frame. Sold by Sotheby's, 1985.

Il Guercino, *St. Luke Painting the Virgin*. Painted as an altarpiece for a church in Reggio d'Emilia, 1662. Noted by Horace Walpole at Althorp in 1760; sold to Colnaghi, 1982; sold on to Kansas City.

Edward Bird, RA, *The Reception in the Kitchen of the News of Master Bobby Shandy's Death*. Bought by the fifth Earl Spencer, 1864; sold by Sotheby's, 1985.

The Gainsborough portrait drawings. Commissioned by the first Earl Spencer; sold to Marshall Spink, 1977; sold to private collector; resold to Agnew's, 1979.

Folio of eighteenth-century views of Rome. Sold to Hazlitt, Goodon & Fox, 1985.

FURNITURE

Suite of Furniture from the Painted Room, Spencer House, consisting of six armchairs, two settees, and two sofas designed by Athenian Stuart (sold to the Victoria and Albert Museum in London).

Six armchairs from the Great Room, Spencer House (designed by Athenian Stuart). Given to John Partridge in payment of "restoration" work at Althorp, 1985. Partridge sold two to an American collector and two (in original condition) to the V&A, for £20,000 (about $30,000), and put two (regilded and reupholstered) on sale for £75,000 (about $112,500).

Armchair from Lady Spencer's bedroom, Spencer House. Sold to the V&A, 1976.

Washstand from Lady Spencer's bedroom, Spencer House. Sold to the V&A, 1979.

Set of seventeenth-century black lacquer furniture, comprising a table and a pair of matching candle stands. Sold (via John Partridge) to the V&A for about £150,000 (about $199,500).

PORCELAIN AND GOLD

Gold ice pails made 1680–90 for the first duke of Marlborough—the principal family treasures in the Marlborough ambassadorial plate. Sold, 1982, through S. J. Phillips of Bond Street to the British Museum for around £1 million ($1,750,000).

Twenty pieces of porcelain, transferred to the Treasury in payment of CTT for £71,530 ($128,754). Distributed to eight museums.

Christopher Gibbs, a leading London antiques dealer, chose most of the furniture for the refurbished Spencer House.

very rich, and happy newlywed.

Set at the end of St. James's Place, in London, with its shoulder against Green Park, Spencer House is an exciting essay in Palladianism by William Kent's lesser-known disciple John Vardy. With its emblems of sacrifices on friezes, it expresses the first stirrings of that passion which obsessed eighteenth-century Englishmen for a return to the days of ancient Greece and Rome. Well-bred young men, like the first earl, toured Italy with tutors, who pointed out to them the glories of ancient Rome. Once home, they filled their houses with Italian paintings and ornately carved friezes copied from Roman temples and formed a society for the culturally educated man, named the Society of Dilettanti.

Before meals, the young Earl Spencer and the other members would drink a toast to "Grecian Taste and Roman Spirit." Their common interest was in introducing classicism to English architecture while eating and drinking exceptionally well. Spencer's mentor was the society's founder, Colonel George Gray, whose portrait now hangs, appropriately, in Spencer House. He chose the architect and designers for the building.

It was a house intended for all the fun and Bacchic revelry that the Georgians relished, and this is still clear in the multimillion-dollar restoration organized by Jacob Rothschild and completed last fall. The restored rooms at Spencer House now shine with those high spirits. Some of the rooms offer good examples of how a young lad freely allowed the arts to influence him.

Jacob Rothschild had long wanted to rescue Spencer House, in London. The fact that the Princess of Wales would be involved didn't hurt.

In Lord Spencer's room, theatricality claims the day. Columns stand in an alcove, smothered in gilded palm fronds, which are transformed into golden tendrils of corn as they wind across the ceiling. In other rooms imaginative allusions are rife. In the Painted Room, the earliest neoclassical room in England, the elegantly painted panels portray allegories on love and the first earl's clandestine marriage.

In the Great Room, on the first floor, the bronze and gilt reliefs, set into the contours of the ceiling, represent other aspects of Georgian pleasure. There, for instance, is Bacchus—that vital Georgian deity—surrounded by leopards guarding wine flasks. There is Apollo, god of music and the arts. There is Venus, driving a marine chariot drawn by dolphins. And on the opposite wall are her attendants, the Three Graces. Athenian Stuart, who replaced Vardy as designer, also created a magnificent pair of gilded pier glasses with Cupids driving chariots drawn by the Spencer armorial griffins. These are now housed at Althorp.

How did James Stuart, nicknamed "Athenian" because of his passion for the Greek, as opposed to the Roman, revival, come to have such a hand in Spencer House? Colonel Gray had met him through the Dilettanti and was prepared to overlook his heavy drinking and alleged dishonesty for the sake of his talents. The many references to Bacchus in the Great Room—he even appears above the entrance door—are an allusion to Stuart's favorite pastime. Gray and Spencer had to wait eight years for him to finish remodeling the first floor, where the rich flamboyance of Vardy is now juxtaposed with Stuart's chaste grace.

To put up with Stuart's weaknesses proved more than worthwhile. He created in the neoclassical Painted Room, at least, an overpowering evocation of other times, as a visitor to it a century ago testified: "When we enter this apartment we seem to be stepping back two thousand years; we are no longer in a London reception room; we are in the tablinium in the house of Marcus Lucretius, or in one of the remarkable painted chambers in the dwelling of Meleager; that red light in the sky is not the sun setting over the trees of the Green Park, but the afterglow of some great eruption of Vesuvius! If a door opens, surely Glaucus of Diomed or the blind Nydia will appear! It is truly a room in which to dream of the past."

The interior designer David Mlinaric, *seated*, an expert on the grand tradition. Jacob Rothschild hired him and his team to restore Spencer House.

FOR THE DENIZENS OF SPENCER House, prosperity, unfortunately, lasted only a few generations. If the Princess of Wales's father (born in 1924) ever

air-ity: In the Painted Room at Spencer House, some of the original Athenian Stuart furniture has been lent back by the Victoria and Albert Museum, which acquired it.

glimpsed life on a grand scale there, it was only when he was an infant. Before the Death Duty tax was almost doubled by Lloyd George, in 1909, England's massive agricultural depressions of the 1800s and the change to industrialization had already cut deeply into aristocratic income. The Spencers of that day had nothing like the riches of their eighteenth-century forebears.

In 1895, Spencer House was leased for the first time. The tenant was a Cockney millionaire diamond dealer named Barney Barnato, who condescendingly remarked of his rented home, "It's not a bad position. Exactly halfway between the Prince of Wales, in Marlborough House, and the prime minister, in Arlington Street." He filled the house with a demimonde of actors, boxers, and journalists and eventually went mad, suffering from the delusion that banknotes were dissolving into dust between his fingers. Barnato later went overboard under mysterious circumstances from a ship returning from South Africa.

The next tenants, who moved in the next year, were relatives: the Spencers' distant cousin the duke of Marlborough and his American heiress wife, Consuelo Vanderbilt. Marriage to Miss Vanderbilt had made the Marlboroughs, who also had been through hard times, rich again. "Dredge the lakes," the duke cabled back to Blenheim Palace after receiving the impressive Vanderbilt dowry.

Jacob Rothschild.

It was from Spencer House that the Marlboroughs left for a fancy-dress ball given by the duke and duchess of Devonshire in their town house in Piccadilly. Dressed as an eighteenth-century Russian aristocrat, the new duchess of Marlborough left the following description of her return home:

"The ball lasted till the early of morning, and the sun was rising as I walked through Green Park to Spencer House, where we then lived. On the grass lay the dregs of humanity. Human beings too dispirited or sunk to find work or favor, they sprawled in sodden stupor, pitiful representatives of the submerged tenth. In my billowing period dress, I

The Dining Room at Spencer House, with a table designed for it by John Vardy, a chandelier made for an Indian palace, and a gilded ceiling restored to its original color.

must have seemed to them a vision of wealth and youth, and I thought soberly that they must hate me."

Although the Spencer family proper resumed life at Spencer House just before the First World War, it was all over by 1927, when—finances dictating his actions—Jack Spencer, the seventh earl, left his town palace for good. Leasing the house to the Ladies' Army and Navy Club, he moved the contents to the country seat at Althorp.

In 1942, during World War II, Lord Spencer returned, this time to remove all the fixed furnishings—doorcases, doors, chair rails, skirting boards, chimneypieces, and the inset panels and reliefs in the celebrated Painted Room—lest they be destroyed. Because everything, down to the smallest detail, had been crafted with great care, he did not want to risk losing even a gilt door handle in a bombing raid. It is a good thing that he did what he did. Two years later, in 1944, a bomb brought down the ceiling in the Painted Room.

It has been said that England's history is preserved one room at a time. Sometimes it can be lost room by room as well. In 1976, the first year of her marriage, Lady Raine Spencer had already begun selling off Spencer family heirlooms, many of them originally from Spencer House. Her explanation was that money was needed for renovations at Althorp.

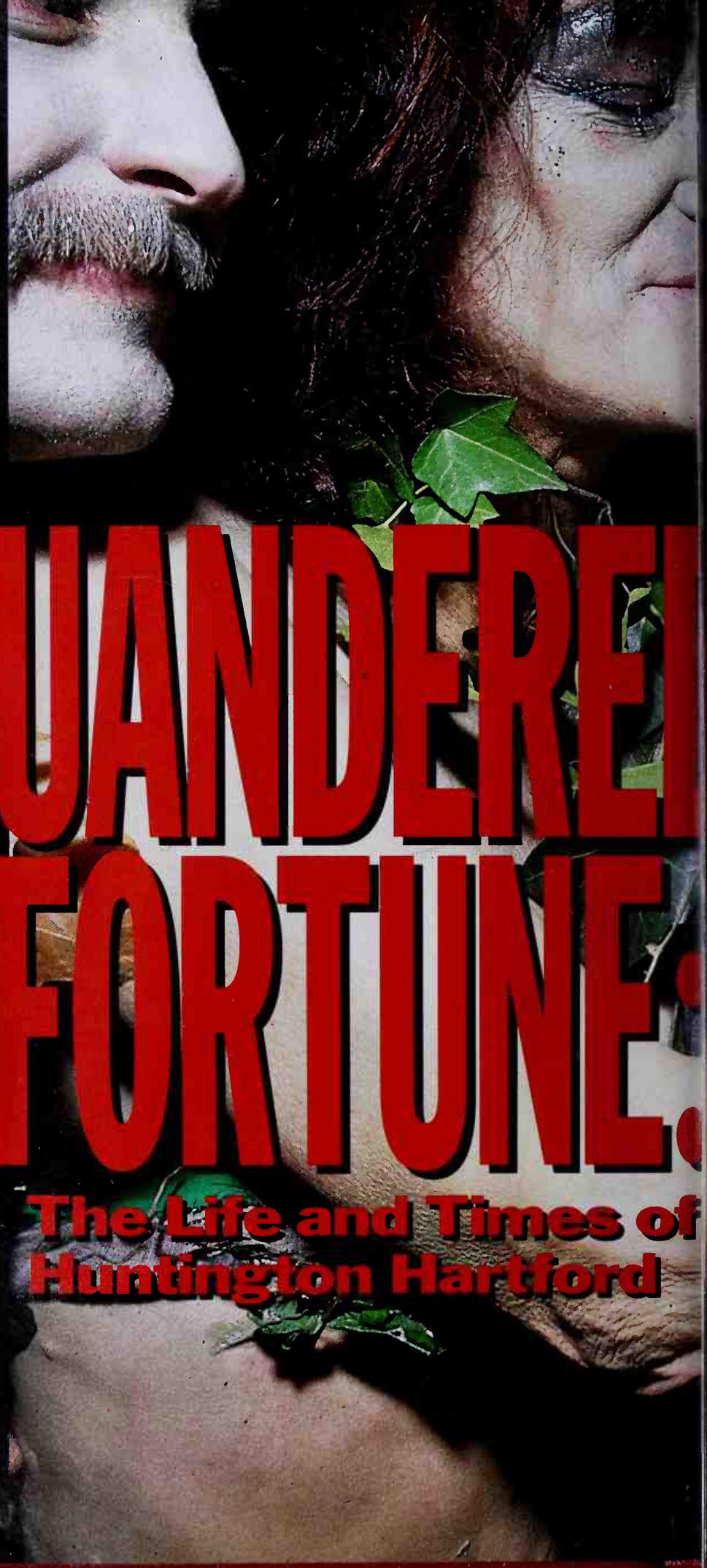
This is a hollow argument at best, for the seventh earl—Johnnie's father, Jack—had left the home not only completely intact but also in excellent condition. Using a 50 percent public grant, available because of Althorp's architectural importance, the seventh earl had undertaken a major renovation in the 1950s and 1960s. Among other things, the roof was repaired and strengthened (iron girders replaced rotten beams) and the interior embellished with chimneypieces and moldings.

Jack Spencer was an aesthete who cared deeply for his house and possessions. This was a man who always cleaned the Marlborough ambassadorial silver with his own hands. The only grave sin he ever committed was the selling of Holbein's famous portrait of Henry VIII (friends said he paid his son's school fees with the proceeds), but that was in 1937, during the Depression.

Seemingly indifferent to family his-

(Continued on page 98)

LUCINDA LAMBTON



The A&P heir Huntington Hartford spent his life and nearly all of his money trying to establish himself as an arbiter of taste and culture. But most of the multimillionaire's philanthropic enterprises—including the Gallery of Modern Art and *Show* magazine—turned out to be failures, monuments to ego and half-informed prejudices. Today, most of his fortune spent, the eighty-year-old dilettante lives in a disheveled Manhattan town house, recalling the days when he was a player on the international art, business, and social scenes. LISA GUBERNICK, in an adaptation of her acclaimed biography, details the life and times of the man who had—and lost—it all.

SQUANDERED FORTUNE:

The Life and Times of Huntington Hartford

It was unseasonably warm for a winter afternoon, some sixty degrees, and the stink of the half-open bags of garbage cluttering the East Thirtieth Street courtyard suffused the winter air. A notice from the city of New York was jammed in the town house's front door: the landlord, it warned, was in violation of various Health Department ordinances.

I pounded with the brass knocker for ten minutes before the master of the house, clad in a stained oxford-cloth shirt and boxer shorts, finally appeared. He said nothing as he opened the door and then turned and headed up the stairs.

Ivy League: Hartford surrounded by admirers at last November's Beaux Arts Society ball, in New York.

Above: **Hartford with his second wife, Marjorie Steele, in front of their Los Angeles home in 1952.** ***Right:*** **During his life, Hartford has run through most of the A&P fortune left to him.**

The house was a scrimmage of artifacts from the many projects conceived by the man hobbling in front of me, small shrines to his broken dreams. On a bookshelf in the living room were plans for Paradise Island, the $30 million Shangri-la he developed in the Bahamas. Nearby was a glassed-in model of a full-rigged sailing ship; nearly a half century earlier the real ship been sailed through the Caribbean in search of lost pirate treasure, though none was ever found.

I followed him up to the bedroom and watched as the prince of this disarray, George Huntington Hartford II, author, philanthropist, museum builder, developer of resorts, and heir to the Great Atlantic & Pacific Tea Company fortune, lay down on the bed. "I'm so tired . . . I'm just so tired," he sighed, curling into a fetal position. "Do you know where Elaine is?" he asked and then drifted off into unconsciousness without waiting for an answer.

I had no reason to stay. As I walked down the stairs I could hear a woman's guttural moans echoing from the floor above. I let myself out the door.

An unkempt man in a tattered plaid fleece-lined coat crouched just outside the gate.

"Do you live in that house?" he demanded, not really expecting an answer. "Strange people live in that house," he muttered as he got up and wandered down the street. "Strange people."

Strangest of all was George Huntington Hartford. Hunt Hartford took the long fall; he ran through one of America's largest fortunes. The Great Atlantic & Pacific Tea Company was built in the mid-1800s by his grandfather George Huntington Hartford I. The grandson came into his portion of the legacy a century later, inheriting over $100 million in shares of A&P stock, which would be worth four times that much in dollars. By 1988, Hartford was down to his last $6 million or so, with most of it in a trust that would go to charity when he died; he was no longer sure which one. Gone as well was Hartford's formerly extensive art collection, much of it mediocre, which had long ago been auctioned off—a fitting metaphor for the decline of a man who once touted himself as a cultural arbiter.

More than $90 million gone. It would not be hard to conjure up images of Rabelaisian excess: women with weighty baubles, greenbacks piled on a craps table. The heaps of photographs and newspaper clips in the chest at the foot of Hartford's bed attest to his celebrity; some hint at his ambitions to be more than another playboy. There was a laughing Huntington Hartford out on the town with Lana Turner; Huntington Hartford in deep discussion with Errol Flynn on one of the zebra-striped banquettes at El Morocco, in New York; Hartford next to a smiling Richard Nixon on the golf course at his Paradise Island resort, playground for the rich and famous, a locus for political intrigue whose cast of characters eventually included Nixon, Meyer Lansky, Howard Hughes, and Robert Vesco.

Huntington Hartford was no Tommy Manville, frittering away tens of millions on a dozen-odd wives. He did not live a life of drunken dissolution like Reginald Vanderbilt—at least not until the end of his life. Hartford's fatal flaw was that he believed that if he bought enough and built enough he could convert all those boldface mentions in society columns into lasting fame, perhaps as an antidote to a gaping loneliness and a narcissistic need for public confirmation. "It was a great big spend-o-rama," said his friend Herbert Smokler, a psychiatrist. "He loved to see his name on things."

Buy and build he did, but in the end there will be no Carnegie Hall or Guggenheim Museum to immortalize the Hartford name. His 150-acre estate in the Hollywood Hills long ago burned to the ground; all that remain are an eroding tennis court and a graffiti-lined swimming pool awash with empty beer cans. Down the hill, just steps away from the heart of Hollywood, stands the James A. Doolittle Theatre, which Hartford renovated and named after himself in the fifties to bring culture to Babylon. "They took my name off," he complained years later. "Go downstairs; see the commendation the city council gave me. I was the one who built it."

HARTFORD'S NURSE WAS HIS BEST AUDIENCE AS HE RAILED

Huntington Hartford became "a new Martin Luther, crusading for a reformation in the fine arts."

on about the past. She was the one by his bedside late one evening as he leafed through a collection of childhood photographs. "Is that your father?" she asked, as her patient turned upon a photograph of a dashing, mustached youth.

"No," he answered. "He was my mother's boyfriend when I was growing up. And when she dropped him he ditched me like hotcakes too."

"There are only two little details I remember about my father," he continued. "Whenever he had a cup of coffee he'd spill half of it because he was shaking so much. And he once bought me a shiny silver balloon. I blew it up too big and it exploded. I always felt bad about that."

In the end, Hunt's father—the difficult, reserved family maverick Edward Vassallo Hartford—would have as fragile a presence in his only son's life as that evanescent balloon, and Hunt Hartford would spend a lifetime trying to make good on that loss.

From his youth, Hunt's father was a willful soul. Edward was the only one of A&P's cofounder George Huntington Hartford's three sons who was not actively involved in running the business that generated the family fortune. In his teens, having declared that "one Hartford ought to be a gentleman," he matriculated at Stevens Institute of Technology while his two brothers, John and George, dropped out of high school to run the A&P grocery stores. Edward went abroad, returning to the United States with a motorcycle equipped with a spring fork that he wanted to adapt to cushion the rough ride of the early automobile. The result was the Hartford shock absorber, which was standard automotive equipment for a time and earned Hartford wealth independent from that of his family. According to Columbus O'Donnell, Edward's grandson, there were even a few years when his grandfather's automotive company made more money than the Hartfords' grocery empire.

Flush with success, Edward Hartford married in 1902 a woman with social ambitions that exceeded his own: Henrietta Guerard Pollitzer, a South Carolina belle whose mother hailed from one of that state's oldest families but who lost entrée to high society when she married a Jewish cotton broker from Austria. Ashamed of her father's past, Henrietta did everything she could to hide her Jewish ancestry, fighting her way back to social acceptance.

Into this overweening need for social significance, the young Hunt Hartford was born. While Edward retreated to his study, brooding over imagined and real slights from the family, Henrietta turned her smothering attention to her fair-haired son. He played alone on the croquet courts, raised apart from any other children, as well as from his older sister, Josephine, an unpretty child whom her mother disdained. (In later years, Josephine said she hardly knew her younger brother at all. "We had different nurses," she explained.)

While Henrietta happily flaunted her shiny new fortune, her husband became consumed by business troubles. By the midteens, the profits from his automotive enterprise had started dropping, and he needed a considerable infusion of funds (more than he could afford to invest himself) to expand the business in order to survive. But when he turned to his brothers for a loan, they refused to come to his aid.

Pictures of an Exhibitionist: Showing off his private collection in 1961.

Within a few years his business failed, and on June 13, 1922, when Hunt was eleven, Edward Hartford died, a broken man.

After Edward's death, Henrietta Hartford began her social ascent in earnest, fueled by funds from Edward's will and from Hunt's trust fund, which she controlled. She set her sights on the queen of seaside resorts: Newport, Rhode Island. In 1927, after two years of rentals, Henrietta took a piece of the Hartford fortune and acquired Seaverge, the estate built by one of Newport's greatest snobs, Commodore Elbridge Gerry. The mansion bordered Bellevue Avenue and was perched on the end of a five-acre plot that ran all the way to the sea. Seaverge was not only perfectly situated physically; it was socially strategic as well. Next door was where Doris Duke, heiress to the tobacco fortune, lived, and just across the street was the Aspegrens' Aspen Hall.

Her young son was a critical piece of Henrietta's strategy for ascending into the New England patriciate. She cooed over how handsome her ebony-eyed boy was becoming, telling him over and over how his low-set ears were most certainly a sign of genius. To ensure his proper molding, she packed him off in 1924 to the St. Paul's School, in Concord, New Hampshire, where Biddles, Sedgwicks, and Astors had been educated since the Civil War. There, however, Hunt found himself rejected by the sons of the scions of America's industry. The six years he spent there were "the worst of my life." "My inferiority complex started around the time I went to fashionable St. Paul's School," he wrote years later. "Why should I, a young boy who in the eyes of the world had everything have felt so inferior in boarding school and, in fact, been quite miserable until I got out of college?" Suspicion about his ethnic heritage and resentment over the newness of his money had a lot to do with it, but so did Hartford's inability to learn the primary tenet of America's reigning Anglo-Saxon aristocracy: the more money one had, the less one should show it (a rule flagrantly broken by his mother on her all too frequent visits to Concord).

As he went from that damaging episode of his life into his first years of adulthood, his mother remained determined to manage his social life. She angled for a matchup with Doris Duke, but when it became clear that her son had no interest in the tobacco heiress, she hired a female escort to introduce her son, then a Harvard freshman, to suitable women. But Hunt clearly had other ideas: six months after meeting her at a tea dance at the Savoy Hotel, he married Mary Lee Epling, an eighteen-year-old dentist's daughter.

The pretty, wide-eyed girl studying to be a kindergarten teacher at Lesley College was hardly of the desired social caliber. But Hartford drove his two-seater Daimler down to the First Presbyterian Church in Covington, West Virginia, where, just before noon on April 18, 1931, the couple were married. "I was a mama's boy," he explained later, "and instinctively I wanted to have a little more freedom."

When Henrietta first heard of the marriage, she was hysterical, lying down on the floor screaming and crying her dismay. But she eventually accepted the inevitable and, after Hartford graduated from college, insisted that her son and his wife take a cottage next door to Seaverge. There he made desultory attempts at writing fiction but ended up spending most of his time on the social circuit with the tennis champion Frank Shields (the actress Brooke's grandfather) and John Jacob Astor VI, dismissed as "Jackaster" by the columnists.

Hunt might have been happy with that aimless existence, but Mary Lee wanted more from her young husband. Before the season was over, under the jurisdiction of his uncles, Hunt Hartford started as a statistics clerk at the nation's largest grocery-store chain, the A&P. But the clerical tasks bored him; soon he spent his time scrawling little poems instead of counting up pound cakes. With an heir's audacity, he asked the company's secretaries to type up his verses. "I had an income of over a million dollars a year," said Hartford. "Can you imagine me sitting out with a bunch of clerks?" For Hunt Hartford, the end of the stint at the A&P came in less than six months' time.

Without his mother around to manage his life, Hartford started to spin out of control. A fixture at El Morocco, he did not exactly seem like the dissolute type; in fact he was becoming legendary for ordering milk when everyone else was drowning in post-Prohibition highballs. But even teetotalers could get into trouble with women.

"Hartford was a disaster," insists one art critic. "He was just an ignoramus who wanted to repeal the twentieth century."

Mary Chastain Grundhoefer, a high-strung chorine who used the stage name Mary Barton, would have been just one of the scores of evanescent beauties who paraded through the heir's life. But on August 18, 1938, she gave birth to Hartford's first child, a son. Florence Grundhoefer Colt, Mary's adoptive mother, and her new husband, John Colt, were listed as the child's parents and agreed to raise him. Hartford set up a $300,000 trust for the child, named Edward for his grandfather.

Mary Lee had known about the affair for some time, and by January 1939 she had a suitor of her own, Douglas Fairbanks, Jr. The Hartfords were divorced by April. "Hunt wanted to be Pygmalion," Mary Lee later explained. "I wasn't the type."

Hunt moved to Hollywood, where he turned his avocation for pretty girls into a vocation, launching a modeling agency that briefly became number one in the world. But the mother of his bastard son had not fared nearly as well. One afternoon, on September 28, 1941, Mary's landlady, Thelma Erickson, went upstairs and opened the door on a tableau of death. Mary was half sitting on the bed, her henna-dyed hair spread about the pillow. She had committed suicide four days earlier, some say bitterly disappointed that Hunt had failed to marry her as he had promised. He assuaged his guilt somewhat by moving his son, nicknamed Buzz, and his adoptive parents to a house nearby. When Buzz was twelve, Florence sat him down and told the story of Mary Barton and his real father. Far from

being angry, however, Buzz listened quietly. For the rest of his life he would try to forge a bond with his father, who would never publicly claim him as his own.

It was not hard for Hartford to make his way to the pinnacle of the modeling business. By trying to create a lure for girls, Hartford suddenly turned the modeling game into a profession. Instead of waiting for months to be reimbursed for a job, the girls were paid as soon as the work was completed; eventually everyone in the business was forced to adopt this system.

Hartford's business ambitions were advanced by the death of his mother, from leukemia, in 1948. Her will was a lasting legacy of her desperate devotions. Henrietta bequeathed some A&P stock and a single pearl necklace to her daughter. Virtually everything else—her securities, her jewels, her antiques—Henrietta left to her son.

Three months after Henrietta's funeral, her son met his second and most beloved wife. In September 1948, Hartford and a date, the actress Yvonne DeCarlo, went to Ciro's, in Hollywood, to see Sophie Tucker sing. His attention fixed on a cinnamon-haired, gap-toothed beauty in stilettos who was peddling cigarettes.

A year later Marjorie Steele, that cigarette girl from Ciro's, married Hartford, in an efficient ceremony in Gardnerville, Nevada, a tiny town along U.S. 395, whose chief distinction was that Clark Gable and Carole Lombard had honeymooned there.

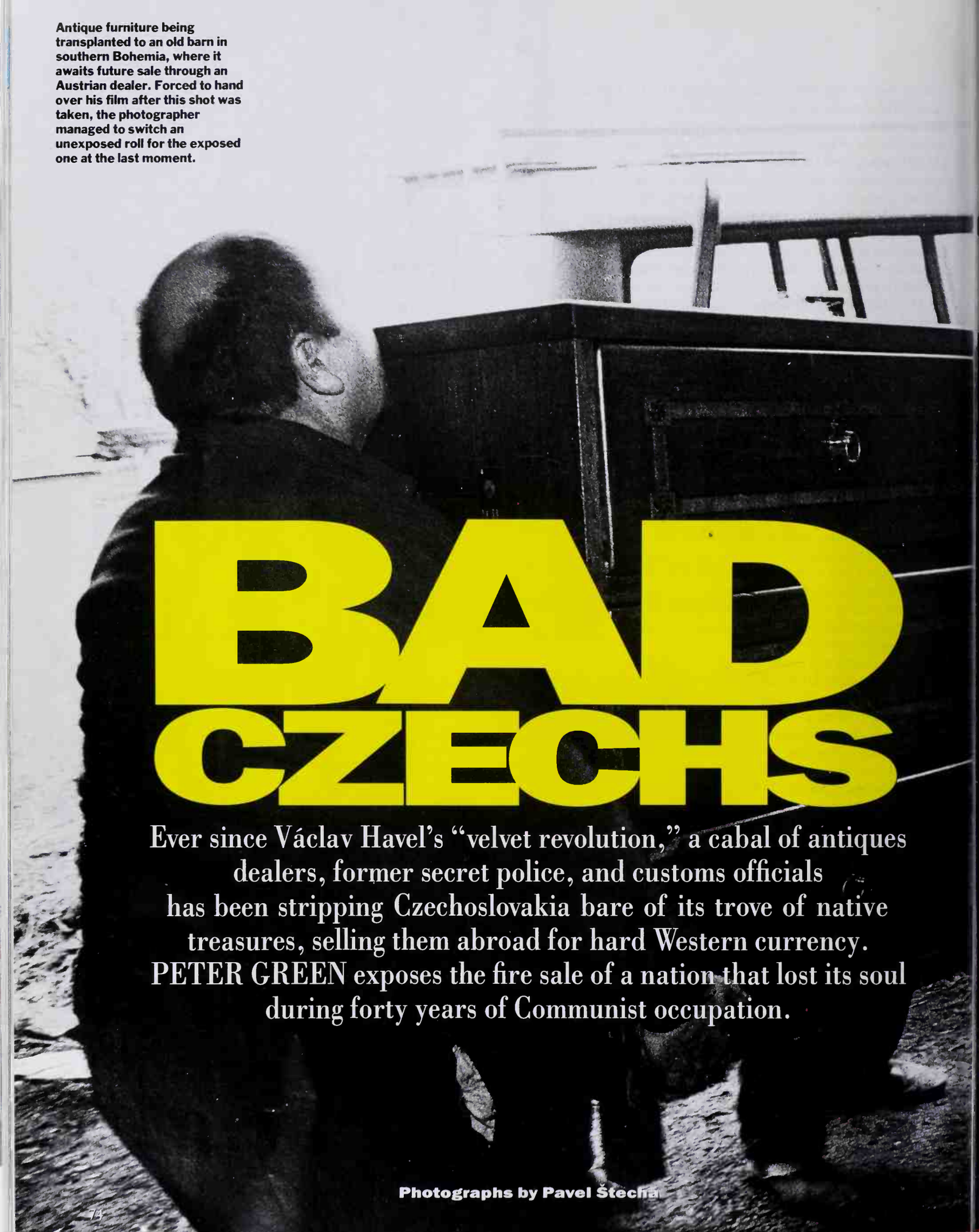
In the nineteenth century, as the historian Daniel Boorstin once pointed out, doers of deeds became heroic; in the twentieth century, they became celebrities, creatures of gossip and public opinion, the ephemeral images found in magazines and newspapers. Such was the world of Huntington Hartford. The heir and his fags-to-riches bride were the perfect icons for America in the anything-is-possible postwar years. They were fêted in dozens of magazines and newspapers and received the ultimate media accolade when Edward R. Murrow interviewed Hunt and Marjorie for the television program "Face to Face." "He wanted to be well known," explained Marjorie. "He was always talking about us becoming the most famous couple in America."

Hello, Dali: *Above*, with his favorite contemporary artist, Salvador Dali, and his third wife, Diane Brown, before the opening of the Gallery of Modern Art, in New York in 1964. *Left:* Less than four years later, the museum foundered. Hartford with Peter Sammartino and Fairleigh Dickinson, Jr., after transferring ownership to Fairleigh Dickinson University.

Hunt Hartford started paving the road to fame within months of his second marriage. He wanted to turn Hollywood into a cultural mecca with the creation of the Huntington Hartford Foundation, an artists' retreat in the Santa Monica Mountains. Christopher Isherwood and Robert Penn Warren were on one of the first selection committees. Edward Hopper painted watercolors there, and Ernest Toch composed his Pulitzer Prize–winning symphony during his stay.

Hartford had definite ideas about the way in which artists should express themselves. He became, in the words of the social critic Tom Wolfe, a new Martin Luther, crusading for a

(Continued on page 102)



Antique furniture being transplanted to an old barn in southern Bohemia, where it awaits future sale through an Austrian dealer. Forced to hand over his film after this shot was taken, the photographer managed to switch an unexposed roll for the exposed one at the last moment.

BAD CZECHS

Ever since Václav Havel's "velvet revolution," a cabal of antiques dealers, former secret police, and customs officials has been stripping Czechoslovakia bare of its trove of native treasures, selling them abroad for hard Western currency. PETER GREEN exposes the fire sale of a nation that lost its soul during forty years of Communist occupation.

Photographs by Pavel Štecha

Bishop František Václav Lobkowitz, the consecrating archbishop of Prague, sits on a nineteenth-century carved-wood chair in an overheated office in the Archbishop's Palace, just outside Prague Castle. A framed, glassed crucified Jesus hangs directly above his head, and the portrait of a black-gowned predecessor hangs above an elegant Biedermeier desk struggling valiantly to support a mass of files, dossiers, and religious tracts. In his square horn-rimmed glasses, Lobkowitz looks very much the descendant of the noble Lobkowitz family that furnished counselors to the emperors of Austria-Hungary and held vast estates in Bohemia and Moravia until the Second World War.

In near-perfect English, the bishop explains that the arrival of democracy has bombarded the church with wave after wave of changes it has long desired but is barely able to absorb. With the fall of communism, hundreds of churches across the country have been given back to the archdioceses and reopened. Underground priests have come out of hiding, and the faithful have again begun to attend the masses and holiday celebrations. But after almost half a century in official disfavor, parish priests are in short supply, and, in an

"We do what we can, but everywhere we tur

Framed: Provisor Kazda, of the Teplá monastery, in western Bohemia, holding all that remains of a painting by the baroque artist Petr Brandl, one of nine works stolen in a violent September 1990 raid.

e have our hands tied."

ironic twist, the long-awaited restoration to the church of the country's chapels, cathedrals, and other houses of worship means the state no longer pays for even the minimal upkeep and care it provided under communism—money that the church badly needs. A law to restore the revenue-generating lands and other property is mired in parliamentary debate; meanwhile, the church has no resources, a situation that has led to a ruinous trend all over Czechoslovakia.

In the past few months, a rash of thefts from country parishes has prompted the archbishop to ask every parish priest to photograph the interior of his church and catalog its contents for their retrieval in the case of their disappearance. "But we have very few priests, thanks to the last forty years, and many parishes are empty, so the watching is not very good," says Lobkowitz, who adds that it is "a sin and a crime" to steal from a church, but he does not entirely blame the thieves themselves. Rather, he reserves his scorn for the antiques dealers and collectors who order the thefts. "The thief, it's his job, but the people who order it, they are the ones whose hands are dirty," he says.

"IF YOU TURN THE LIGHTS OUT, FOLKS WILL STEAL," THE former UN ambassador Andrew Young once said, in response to the looting in New York during the blackout of 1977. Oddly enough, in Czechoslovakia the reverse seems to be true. Ever since the Middle Ages, Czechoslovakia has been a nation up for grabs. Consisting of what was once the kingdom of Bohemia, along with the former dominions Moravia and Slovakia, this Central European nation has lived through eras of both enlightenment and unspeakable darkness. From the Slavs, in the fifth century, to the Hapsburgs and on through the Nazis and the Soviets, Czechoslovakia has watched conquering armies come and go, always aware of its own, rich cultural identity.

But now that the light of freedom has been lit, something has gone amiss. With the opening of the borders and the freeing up of the economy after forty years of Stalinist rule, Czechoslovakia, long one of the most closed and isolated countries in the Soviet bloc, has become a cultural strip mine as the nation's heritage is being carted away by thieves, unscrupulous antiques dealers, and acquiescent museum and customs officials. The country's millennium-old artistic heritage—from Renaissance paintings and baroque religious statues to nineteenth-century folk furniture and hand-carved stone troughs—is under attack by three forces. The first, and most flagrantly illegal, is the looting of churches and synagogues of their treasures by former secret police, who ship these past overwhelmed or bribed border guards and customs officials to be sold through antiques dealers and private collectors in Germany and Austria. The second is in a legal gray area but is almost as damaging: Austrian and German antiques dealers travel the country, going from house to house looking for folk art and furniture left lying about in attics, which they buy from desperate townspeople for tiny sums. These same dealers scour the countryside for hand-carved seventeenth- and eighteenth-century stone cattle troughs, stone shrines, and crosses that mark the roadsides and village greens, paying hush money to the nearest peasant so that no one calls the police. The third is the very cooperation of a people, including Czech antiques dealers and the ignorant townsfolk on whom they often prey, who have been left without the economic safety net that communism provided them at the price of any other freedom.

Interpol and police sources say the theft of religious artifacts is particularly severe. Earlier this year, thieves entered the St. John Nepomuk church, in the small town of Železná Hora, in the Iron Hills of the Bohemian-Moravian highlands—a church designed in the eighteenth century by the Italian-born, Czech-trained baroque architect Giovanni Santini—and made off with its high-baroque wooden altar, hand-carved by the master Czech carver Řehoř Thény; the altar is listed in the UNESCO register of the world's most important historical and cultural treasures. In the town church of Nesvaceli, near Benešov, just east of Prague, thieves stole an early-fifteenth-century carved linden-wood polychromed Pietà, considered perhaps the finest of its type and period in all of Europe. Last September 12, shortly after one A.M., two Czech-speaking men stopped their car outside the Teplá monastery, in Teplá, western Bohemia (Czechoslovakia). They asked the monastery guard to come help them repair the car. As he drew near, one of the two men, who was wearing a mask, pulled out a revolver and forced the guard to let them into the monastery. Leaving the guard tied up in a hallway, the two men made off with nine paintings, including four by the eighteenth-century Czech artist Frantz-Theodor Dallinger.

Bounced Czech: Ladislav Větrovec, a guard at the Teplá monastery, shows the spot where he was beaten and tied up by thieves the night of the theft.

All told the haul was worth 530,000 crowns in Czech currency (about $18,000). Across the border in Western Europe, Czechoslovak antiques and artwork can be worth ten or twenty times as much—a strong temptation for dealers and collectors who can keep their purchases quiet. "Most of these pictures go directly to private collections and never go on sale," explains Major Jaroslav Závadsky, head of the art-crimes squad of the Czech police. Other, more recognizable work will probably go underground for ten or even twenty

years, until thieves or their customers dare to bring it back to the surface. Závadsky says Czechoslovakia now leads Europe in thefts from art galleries, museums, castles, and churches, and 85 percent of the crimes happen in Bohemia and Moravia, the two regions closest to the West. In the last three months there occurred 240 cultural thefts, including 210 from churches—more than in the first six months of 1990, when only 178 cultural burglaries took place, 150 of them from churches. Police expect the total to top 1,000 thefts and burglaries this year, not including those from private homes and collections. Altogether, more than 3,000 major works of art were stolen in Czechoslovakia last year, and police say many Czech thieves are working for antiques dealers just across the borders in Bavaria and Austria.

The humble homes of the Czech people have also been ripe for the picking. Living for centuries in the same villages as their forefathers, even the poorest of Czech peasants accumulated a wealth of folk art. Parts of Bohemia and Moravia, heavily influenced by centuries of German cultural domination, have folk customs and art that are almost identical to those found in the neighboring regions of Germany and upper Austria; as a result, Czech peasant furniture is now in great demand in Austria and Germany. "The Czech lands were not as damaged during World War II; very few towns were bombed, so there is still a lot of china and furniture left in people's households," says František Krejča, an ethnographer at the Museum of South Bohemia, in České Budéjovice, who is leading a campaign to stop the export of Czechoslovakia's cultural heritage. Says Dune Pirnosová, a colleague of Krejča's at the museum, "We have become a well for Germany, where everything was destroyed. They want to buy things of historical value, and our people see this same stuff as junk. The whole purpose of education in our country was to make reliable party members. People learned nothing of humanist values, of appreciation for the arts and culture. Most people here don't respect the value of antiques, because they see only the material value, not the sentimental value."

"We don't want to stop the trade, but when we see hundreds of top-quality things leaving the country, and for such low prices, with labels on them saying they're headed for Holland or the U.S.A., it's heartbreaking," Pirnosová says, shaking her head in dismay. "Our country is poor, we need money, and some people think this is the way we can get it." Pirnosová says that she recently appraised a sofa and two chairs for a local woman. "The chairs were not especially interesting, mass-produced around the turn of the century. I appraised them for 10,000 crowns [$350]. But a week later, I received a letter from the woman saying it was no wonder so many people sold their furniture to Austrians, because we were undervaluing it.

"She said she had just sold it to an Austrian for 1,500 shillings [about $150]. She was so set on getting her hard currency, she didn't even realize that she could have sold it here and changed her money even on the black market and gotten more for it. That is the level of ignorance we have to deal with."

It is a buyer's market, and as the archbishop remarked, it is the antiques dealers who are its most cynical manipulators. A special Ministry of Culture commission of experts and curators from the National Gallery, in Prague, and other top museums in the country is supposed to keep an eye on the antiques shops, preventing anything that could be considered an integral part of the country's heritage from leaving Czechoslovakia. But the commission is woefully short-staffed, and the proliferation of antiques shops has left it helpless in the face of unscrupulous dealers. "In fact, our commission has no real power," says Helena Koenigsmarkova, deputy director of Prague's Museum of Decorative Arts. "We can't check their books, we can't tell if they are not keeping good records, and they can charge anything they want."

Koenigsmarkova says that few of the antiques dealers have much interest in running an honest shop. Restrictive export laws introduced after the pillage of Czechoslovakia's cultural heritage by top Communist officials in the 1950s and 1960s mean that most desirable objects may not be exported. But it is only a matter of doctoring papers to pretend an eighteenth-century highboy is actually an early-twentieth-century reproduction. "All the old people in the commercial antiques business are still in their places. The antiques shops all belonged to Klenoty," she says, referring to the Communist-era state-owned jewelry monopoly, which was a preferred place of employment for retired secret policemen and top party hacks. "But all the bosses of these shops and of the legal antiques-export firms were released from their jobs, and now they are looking for work. People from abroad who want to make business with antiques here can easily find these people from the old structures."

Major Závadsky says that his team of two men have had their eyes on several dealers for some time, but since the fall of communism a Czech policeman's lot has not been a happy one. Investigating magistrates refuse almost all requests for search warrants, hoping not to be associated with the totalitarian excesses of the former, Communist regime. "If we find someone trying to cross the border with a car full of stolen antiques, we can't even get a search warrant to look in his home or shop," he says. Závadsky is also severely handicapped by a lack of equip-

A pile of troughs, used as garden planters, awaiting sale in a Czech meadow.

"When I was growing up the churches wer

The police recovered this elaborate central Bohemian crucifix (ca. 1850), but not before it was irreparably damaged by thieves.

ment. His two-man squad shares with another office a small computer, on which it keeps all its art-theft records, and has no means rapidly to transmit quality pictures of stolen objects to border crossings or police in Germany and Austria. "We do what we can, but our hands are tied," he says.

WHAT MAKES THE FORMER SOVIET DOMINATION OF Czechoslovakia—and the country's current pillaging—so tragic is that the region was for long a nexus of Western artistic imagination. The industrial center of the Hapsburg empire, Czechoslovakia grew especially rich in patrons and collectors from the time of the reign of Hapsburg Emperor Rudolf II (1576 to 1612) on (with a respite during the Thirty Years' War, in the early seventeenth century). Catholic patronage led to an influx of artists and architects from across Europe. These artists—including Giovanni Santini—left their glorious mark on numerous cities and towns and influenced such Czech-born masters as Cristof Dientzenhofer and his son Kilian Ignaz; the two built the exuberant St. Nicholas church in Prague's Lesser Town Square, and the latter, the more restrained St. Nicholas church in the Old Town Square, as well as Benedictine and Cistercian churches throughout the countryside. The Italianate influence soon spread throughout the Czech lands, leaving the countryside peppered with Mediterranean-looking religious monuments; its flamboyant style was mirrored both in Bernini-inspired sculpture and in painting. Surprisingly, even given all this foreign influence, Czechoslovakia's architectural and artistic heritage remained essentially home-produced. Mojmír Horyna, a professor of art history at Prague's Charles University, explains: "It's part of our cultural identity that all our treasures were made here; they are as much a part of our country as our lakes and forests."

The rather plebeian-looking Major František Rubaš, chief of police in the small town of Tachov, is not the person you would expect to have been assigned to protect a huge chunk of this heritage. A hefty man in his midfifties, Rubaš rose to the rank of captain of the Tachov police before he spoke out against the "normalization" of Gustav Husak's hard-line Communist regime in the early 1970s. His criticizing the ideological "purifications" that haunted Czechoslovakia in the years following the 1968 Soviet-led Warsaw Pact invasion earned him a nineteen-year stint as a driver and mechanic before he was reinstated as Tachov's police chief, last July, during the cleaning out of "old structures"—as a popular euphemism for Communist-party members, former secret policemen, and their friends has it. While he was certainly courageous, no one would think Rubaš an expert in the country's aesthetic riches; still, their long-term survival depends on people like him.

Art thefts have presented Rubaš with a crime wave the likes of which he has never seen before. In the past year alone, twenty-six churches in Tachov and the surrounding countryside have been robbed. "[The thefts] began in August 1990 but now are getting more frequent. Most of the stolen objects go straight across the border and into private collections," he says, pulling a pungent-smelling Petra cigarette from its brown-and-white paper packet. "The problem," he says, as he pauses to light the cigarette, "is the border."

Germany and the European Community's open borders are only six miles away as the crow flies, twenty miles by car. Since the border was opened, in December 1989, thieves are out of the country often before the alarm is raised. "Last year the three border

(Continued on page 101)

A nineteenth-century statue of Saint John Nepomuk recently recovered by Prague police.

ır museums."

the way they were

Glamorous yet quaint: Palm Beach in the 1950s and '60s was a naively decadent playground where Queen Mary (Sanford) reigned supreme and everybody *square danced on Thursday nights at Mar-a-Lago. STEPHEN BIRMINGHAM tells it the way it was.*

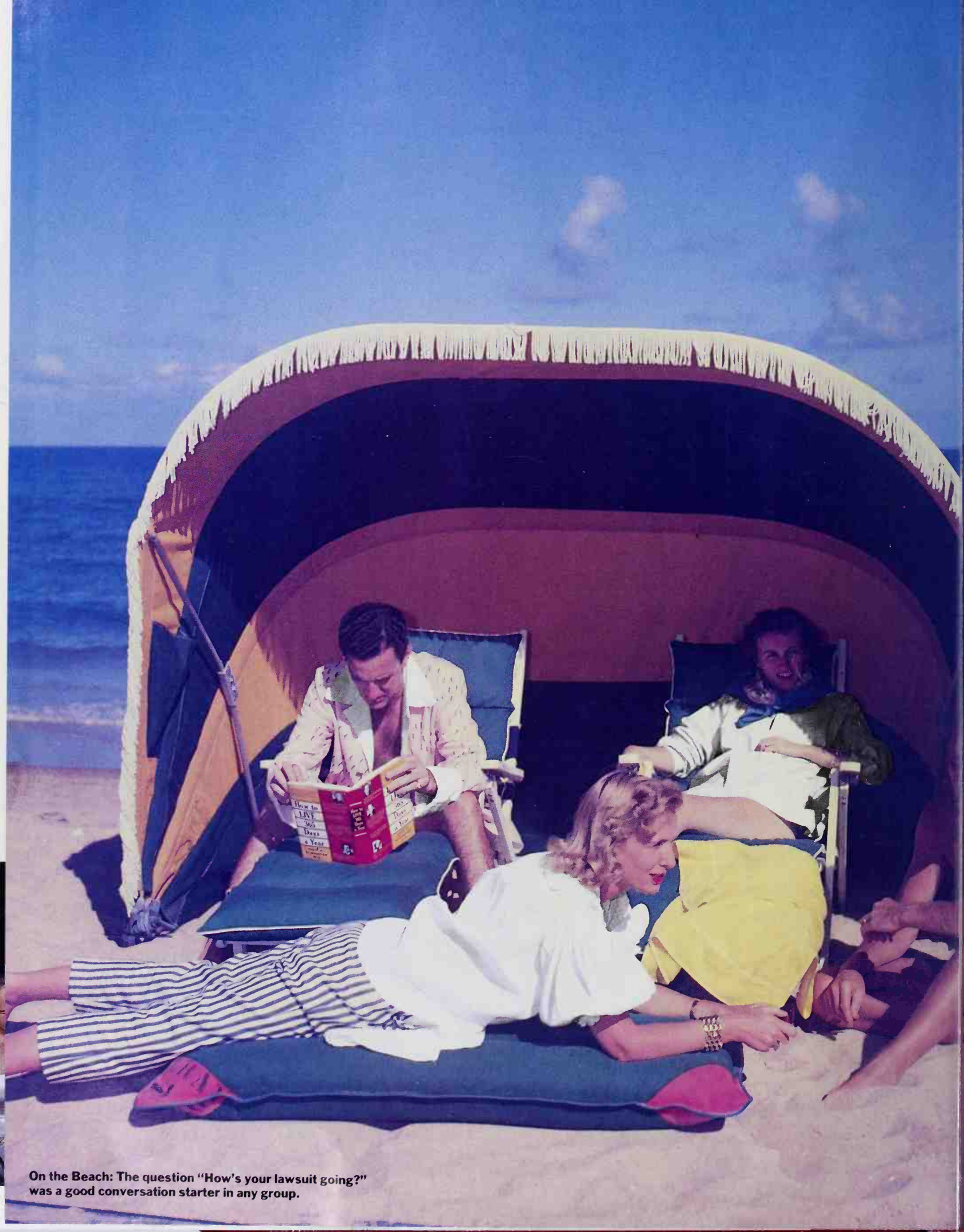
Photographs by Slim Aarons

Laddie Sanford and Flo (Mrs. Earl E. T.) Smith at the Everglades Club in 1959.

THERE WERE NO TRUMPS THEN, BUT there were plenty of face cards, and they all knew who they were. It was as if everyone who really mattered had come together in the right place— to laugh, to dance, to drink, and to make love and be rich together—in Palm Beach in the fifties and sixties, a gently decadent era when Palm Beach was more a private club than a glittering resort.

Of all the gaily colored moths that fluttered about then, the undisputed queen bee was Mrs. Stephen ("Laddie") Sanford, or Queen Mary, as she was unabashedly called. Royal garden parties were held in her honor, and if one was invited to her oceanfront villa, Las Incas, with its famous Shell Room,

Animal Magnetism: Daphne (Mrs. George) Cameron in the trophy room of Laddie Sanford's house.



On the Beach: The question "How's your lawsuit going?" was a good conversation starter in any group.

decorated entirely with seashells, one knew that one needed to climb no farther. People you had never heard of came from places like Cleveland and booked the whole winter season at the Breakers hotel, hoping to get the nod from Mary. Few did. Las Incas is gone now, but Mary Sanford—frail, and of an unguessable age—lives on in a more modest fashion on the "wrong" side of the island. She long ago offered to pass on her scepter to a successor, but no one has stepped forward to accept it. Without Mary Sanford at the helm, Palm Beach seems like a rudderless ship, an untethered balloon.

WHAT DID THEY TALK ABOUT THEN? Why, last night's party, of course—who got drunk and made a fool of himself, and who slipped off into the pool house with whom, and for how long, and for what possible purpose. Lawsuits were a popular diversion, and the question "How's your lawsuit coming?" was a good conversation starter in almost any group. Gregg Sherwood Dodge, the beautiful ex-showgirl who had married the automobile heir, was suing Mary Sanford. Nobody really knew what this was all about, but it was exciting while it lasted because it split Palm Beach right down the middle, between Mary loyalists and Gregg loyalists, and everyone was disappointed when the two women kissed and made up.

Divorces and love affairs were as messy then as they are now, but somehow they were more glamorously messy. Detectives once barged in on Mollie Wilmot and found her wearing nothing but her estranged husband's self-winding watch. ("I had to wear it to keep it wound," she explained.) Then there was the dramatic moment when J. Patrick Lannan, the late art collector, who had an underground private museum beneath his Palm Beach house, "changed Marys." His "constant companion" had been Mary Sanford. Suddenly the designer Mary McFadden, quite a bit younger, had taken the other Mary's place, and what did everybody think of that?

There was a third Mary in those days—Mary Donahue. She was considered rather naughty, but her husband's brother, the Woolworth heir Jimmy Donahue, long dead, was the *really* naughty one, and everyone loved him—especially the duchess of Windsor. Other exotics floated in and out of Palm

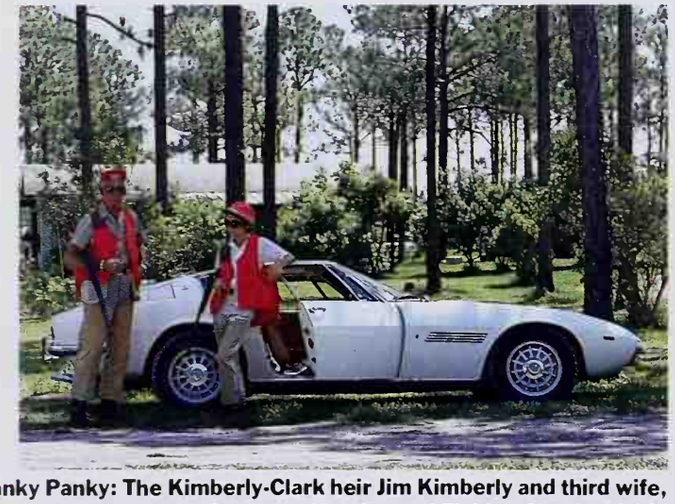
Christina Onassis in 1968.

Born to Be Wild: Tony Heminway, grandson of the legendary Dolly O'Brien, with his wife in 1966.

Alice Topping poolside at Ned McLean's.

A la Mod: J. Patrick Lannan in Addison Mizner's apartment on Worth Avenue.

Mayor Earl E. T. Smith and young Earl at the Bonnette Hunting and Fishing Club in 1968.



Hanky Panky: The Kimberly-Clark heir Jim Kimberly and third wife, Jacquie, at the Bonnette Hunting and Fishing Club in 1968.

Peter Pulitzer and Patsy Bartlett, *right*, at a Palm Beach fête.

The princess d'Arenberg, later the duchess d
née Peggy Bancroft, at Lilly Pulitzer's h

Beach then. There was the Donahues' cousin Barbara Hutton, looking like a beautiful white lily whose slender stem had already been broken by the storm. And there was Porfirio Rubirosa, the dashing Dominican chain-smoker and womanizer.

Meanwhile, Lilly Pulitzer—this was long before there was a Roxanne—made dirty feet chic. She went barefoot everywhere, and it was amusing to watch her padding around her kitchen in her bare feet, cooking dinner for a party, because everybody knew that she could afford a cook, just as she could have afforded shoes. Lilly also made it chic to *work*. She made brightly patterned women's shifts and brightly patterned men's pants. Soon lots of social Palm Beach women were working too, opening little art galleries on Worth Avenue and little shops that sold costly and mostly useless bibelots, and that did nothing but lose money.

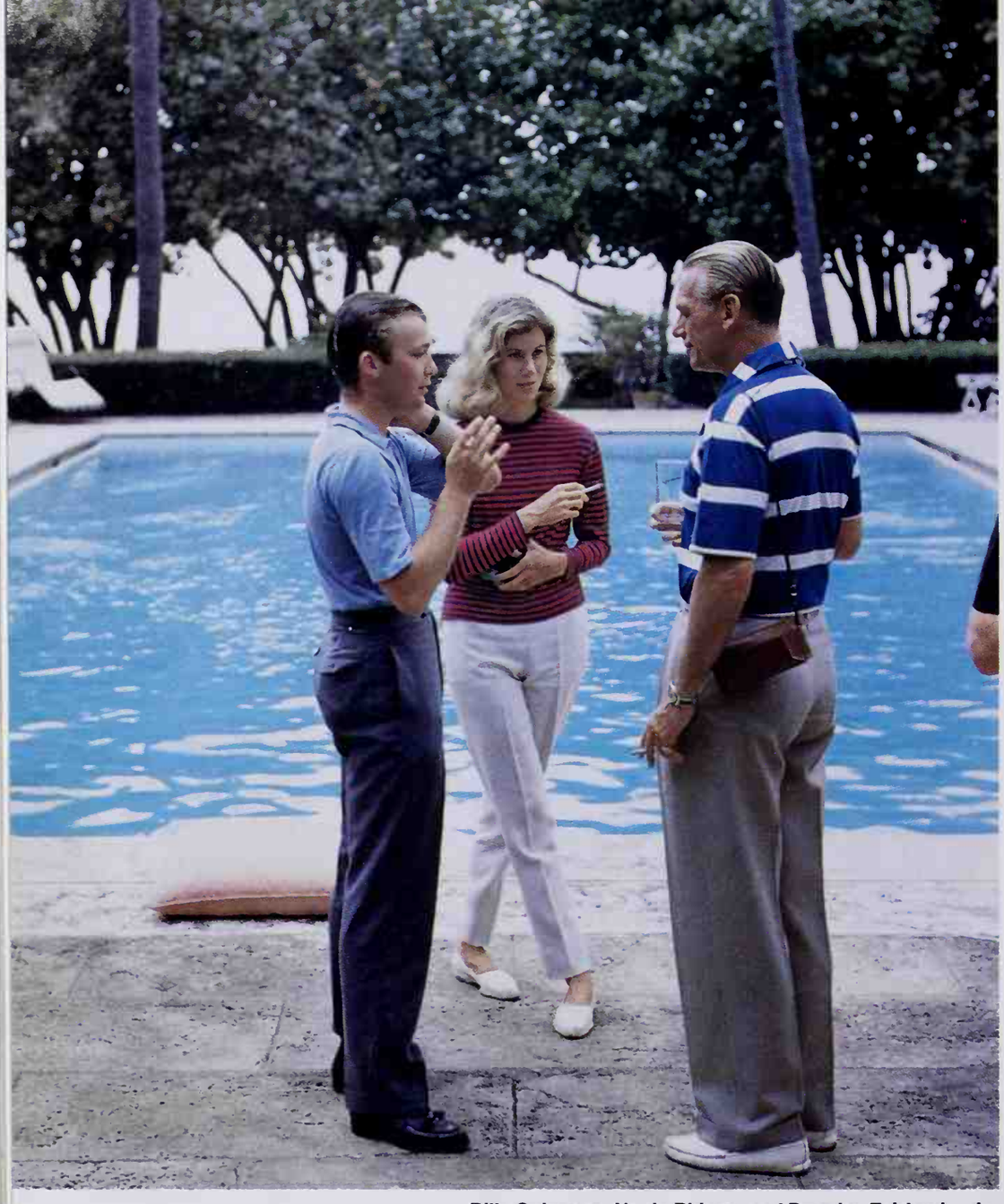
And then there were the Kennedys—an interesting lot. They had a handsome son who wanted to be president of the United States, although their Palm Beach house didn't even have a *pool*. But then Rose always preferred to swim in the ocean anyway.

Marjorie Merriweather Post was a problem. She wasn't really social, but she was very rich, and her house, Mar-a-Lago, was the biggest in Palm Beach, so she couldn't be ignored. She gave terrible parties, and her Thursday-night square dances were universally dreaded, though attending them was a must. They were carried out with paramilitary precision, with Mrs. Post barking out the orders in her loud midwestern twang. Guests were expected at the doorstep of Mar-a-Lago precisely at 7:30, not a minute earlier or a minute later. Once they had all flocked in, each guest was served no more than two drinks. At 8:00 sharp, dinner was announced, and those whose invitations read "cocktails only" were ordered to leave, while the rest were seated. Mrs. Post's meals were undistinguished. Chicken hash was a favorite entrée. At precisely 9:30 P.M., guests were marched toward the ballroom, but before entering they had to remove their shoes and don satin slippers, thus to protect Mrs. P.'s highly waxed ballroom floor. Then, *everybody* had to square dance. No wallflowering or resting between sets was permitted. On the dot of eleven, the music stopped, and

Mrs. Leverett Saltonstall Shaw of Boston with Doc Holden, close friend of the duke of Windsor, in 1959.

The Queen Mary: The reigning Palm Beach hostess Mary Sanford with Brownie McLean in 1959.

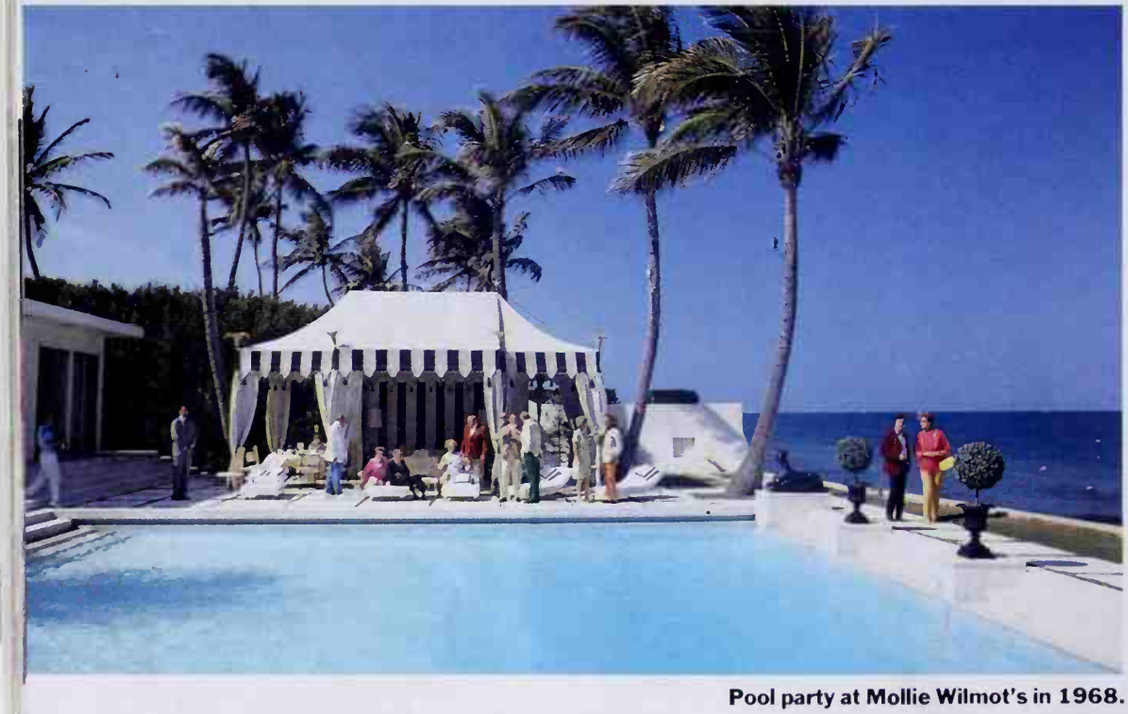
Velvet Underground: Jock McLean and his niece in 1959.



Billy Guinness, Nonie Phipps, and Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., poolside at Loel Guinness's house in Manalapan.

The duke of Windsor's golf clubs, at the first tee of the Seminole Club in 1964.

Louise Melhado, now Grunewald, in 1968.



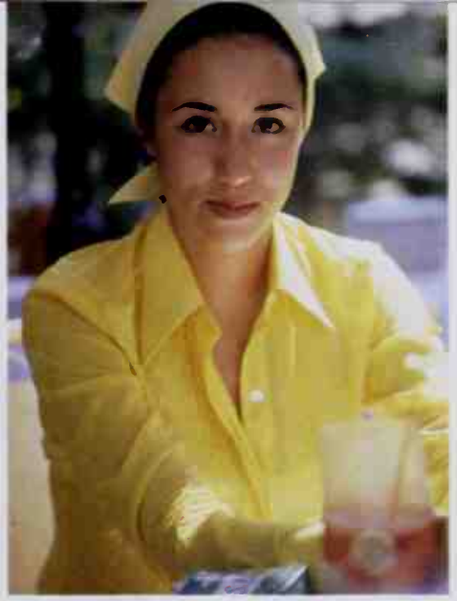
Pool party at Mollie Wilmot's in 1968.

guests were told to go home.

Today, Mrs. Post's hated parties seem no more than a fleeting, irritating memory to those few Palm Beach people left who had to endure them. Now Donald Trump owns Mar-a-Lago, which is overmortgaged and which the town council would like to turn into fifteen home sites. And Brownie McLean, whose mother-in-law owned the Hope diamond, now lives in Trump's failed condo in West Palm Beach. Today, the old Palm Beach of thirty-odd years ago, most of which was recorded for posterity by Slim Aarons, seems quaint and lovable, like something you might pull out of a trunk in Grandma's attic—as quaint as a flower-printed pair of Lilly Pulitzer pants.

The old Palm Beach seems almost to blend with the Old South—a civilization gone with the wind. □

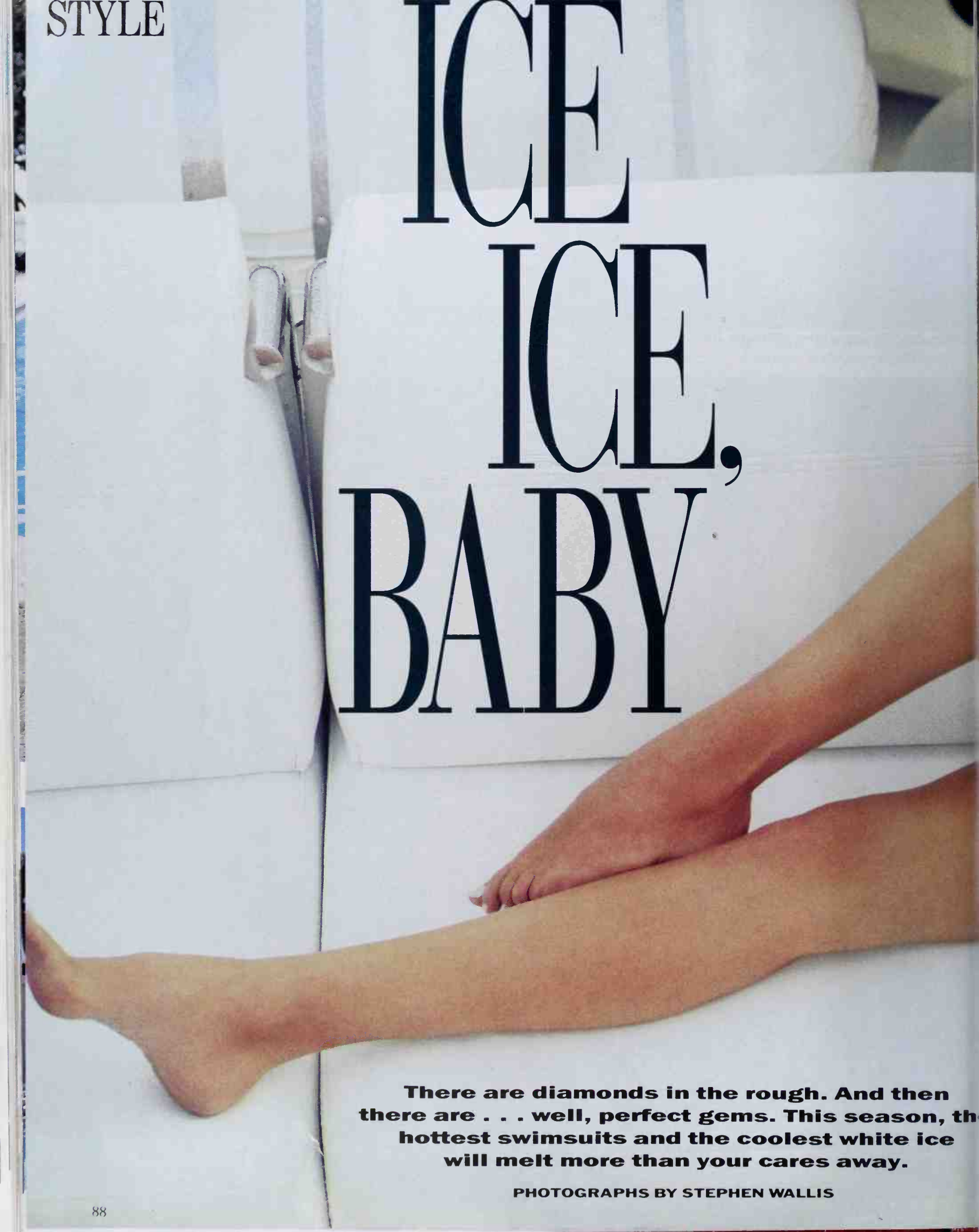
ice (Mrs. Dan) Topping with her children in 1968.



Caris Goulandris in 1968.

er: C. Z. Guest with a car given to her
Ford II for her birthday.

ICE ICE, BABY



There are diamonds in the rough. And then there are . . . well, perfect gems. This season, th hottest swimsuits and the coolest white ice will melt more than your cares away.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY STEPHEN WALLIS

Jewelry: Pearl choker of 10-millimeter cultured pearls and 15 carats of brilliant-cut diamonds; gold bangle set with 63 carats of brilliant-cut diamonds; gold hoop earrings with 15 carats of brilliant-cut diamonds. All available at HARRY WINSTON, New York, Beverly Hills.

White lace bikini top and white silk organza ruffled skirt by BOB MACKIE. Available by special order from Martha, New York. Sun care: Conquête du Soleil, by Lancôme. Fragrance: Trésor, by Lancôme.

Jewelry: "Niagara" necklace, of 132 carats of oval, pear-shaped, and round diamonds, set in platinum. Matching earclips with 31 carats of oval and pear-shaped diamonds. Both available at VAN CLEEF & ARPELS, New York, Palm Beach, Beverly Hills.

Swimsuit by ROBIN PICCONE. Available at Bloomingdale's, New York. Silk organdy shirt by ADRIENNE LANDAU, to order at Neiman Marcus, Dallas. Gloves by LaCrasia. Sun care: City Block Daily Face Protector, by Clinique. Fragrance: Wrappings, by Clinique.

velry: Three diamond earrings worn as a brooch: flower rclip, earclip with a cascade of over 31 carats of diamonds, l earclip with a spray of flowers. Her earclips have outer tals of baguette diamonds and inner petals of round monds. Bracelet of delicate flowers with round, pear- ıped, and marquise diamonds set in platinum. Flower rclip of diamonds set in platinum worn as a ring. All ilable at VAN CLEEF & ARPELS, New York, Palm Beach, verly Hills.

ère/viscose jacket and panties by THIERRY MUGLER. ailable at Riding High, New York, and Theodore, Los geles. Turban by Deborah LaPearl. Available at Patricia ld, New York. Sun care: Clarins Sun Care Milk SPF6. ıgrance: Eau Dynamisante, by Clarins.

Jewelry: Platinum watch set with 25 carats of diamonds, from the Harry Winston Ultimate Timepiece Collection. Available at HARRY WINSTON, New York, Beverly Hills.

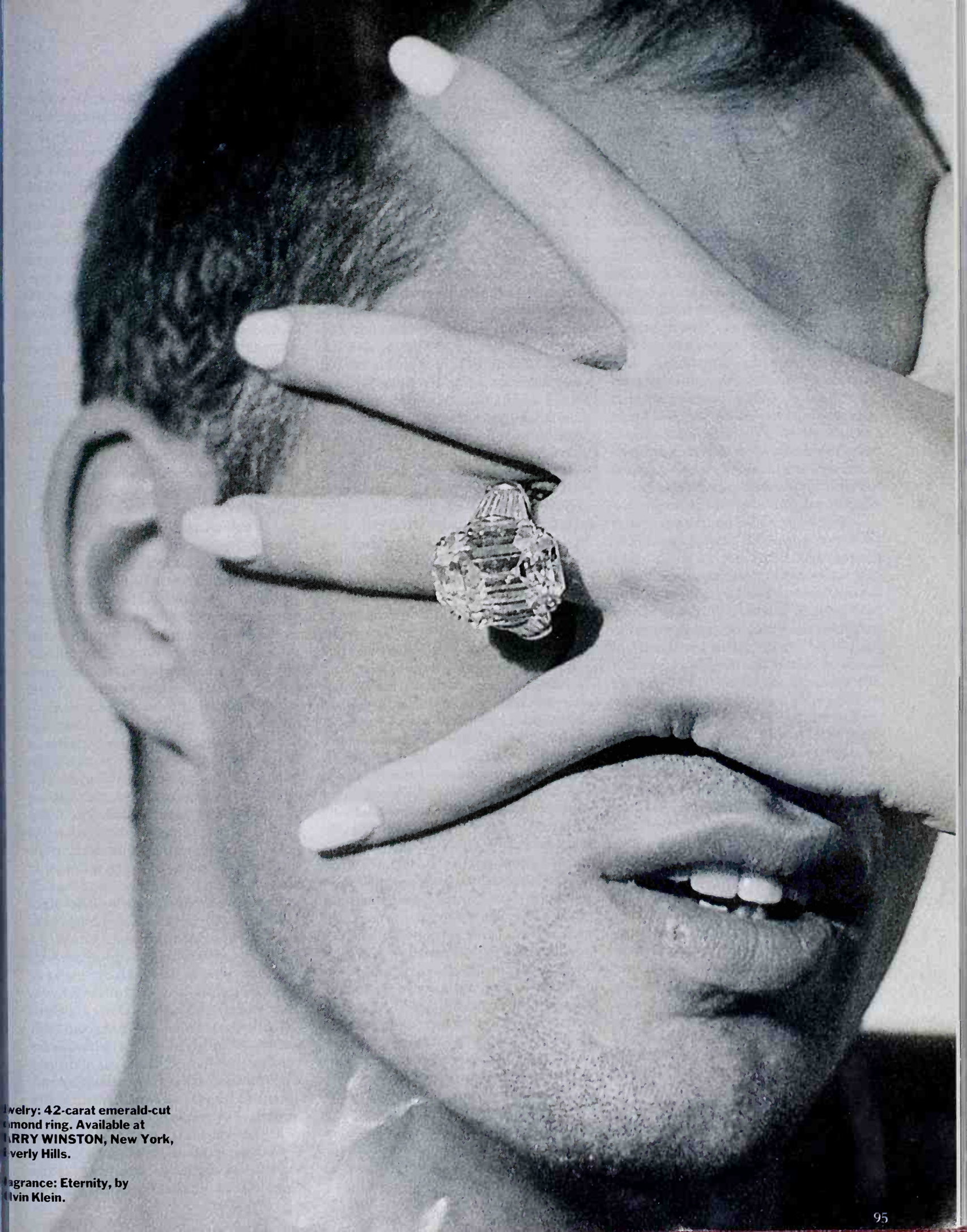
White cotton terry robe by SULKA & CO., New York. Sunglasses by Ray-Ban. Sun care: Bronzage Satine Protective Bronzing Mist, by Chanel. Fragrance: Égoïste, by Chanel.

Jewelry: Daisy earclips, with petals covered in round diamonds and center of yellow diamonds. Daisy-chain necklace with petals covered in diamonds and yellow-diamond centers. Both available at VAN CLEEF & ARPELS, New York, Palm Beach, Beverly Hills.

White romper by ALBERTA FERRETTI. Available at Shauna Stein, Los Angeles. His silk robe by ALFRED DUNHILL OF LONDON, New York. Swim trunks and tuxedo shirt by GIORGIO ARMANI. Available at Giorgio Armani Boutique, New York. Fragrance: Armani.

Jewelry: Diamond earrings of 54 rare pink diamonds with 46 tapered baguette white diamonds. On her right hand: 23-carat emerald-cut diamond, 26-carat pear-shaped diamond, and the Historic Jonker Number 4—a 31-carat emerald-cut diamond. On her left hand: 16-carat marquise-cut diamond. All available at HARRY WINSTON, New York, Beverly Hills.

Rhinestone swimsuit by GIORGIO DI SANT'ANGELO, to order at Linda Dresner, New York. Cherry feather hat by Philip Treacy, London, to order at Bergdorf Goodman, New York. Lip and nail color: Piroska, by Guerlain. Fragrance: Samsara, by Guerlain.



Jewelry: 42-carat emerald-cut diamond ring. Available at HARRY WINSTON, New York, Beverly Hills.

Fragrance: Eternity, by Calvin Klein.

WAITING FOR MIKE

(Continued from page 26)

kiewicz, the director of *All about Eve* and *Cleopatra,* who had some personal knowledge of the fickleness of Hollywood. Mankiewicz went up to Nichols's agent, pointed to the boy wonder, and said, "Make him think that it will last forever."

Nichols knew better. As he told one journalist on the set of his next picture, *Catch-22,* "Every time you get too much for what you've put in, you know it's going to come out of your ass later." And indeed it did. When he made *Catch-22,* he was the first person to receive $1 million to direct a movie. The man who had made his reputation filming intimate scenes between two or three people must have felt he was capable of engineering an epic. He hired a huge, all-star cast and a special-effects crew to film Joseph Heller's phantasmagorical antiwar novel. The movie went several million dollars over budget, the reviews were mixed, and there were no profits.

Things were beginning to go awry. A year later *Carnal Knowledge,* from Jules Feiffer's mordant, knowing script, elicited some raves but also some angry denunciations. *The Day of the Dolphin,* which Nichols later said he made only to fulfill a three-picture commitment to Joseph E. Levine, was a critical and financial failure (Pauline Kael called it "the most expensive *Rin Tin Tin* picture ever made"). But it was not as embarrassing as Nichols's misfired 1975 comedy *The Fortune.* Teaming Warren Beatty and Jack Nicholson with a talented newcomer, Stockard Channing, and with a script by Carol Eastman (Adrien Joyce), who had written *Five Easy Pieces,* the movie excited enormously high expectations. It proved disappointing in all departments. Frank Rich, who was then the movie critic for *New Times,* called *The Fortune* "cold, dead, and even a little ugly." Rich had spent several weeks on the set during production, and he observed the sycophantic atmosphere that often surrounds a successful movie director and can prove fatal to his judgment.

"I heard the word 'wonderful' more times in ten days than I had heard it in my entire life," Rich wrote. "Everything was 'wonderful,' and some things were 'very wonderful' or even 'extremely wonderful.'. . . Things were so wonderful out in Culver City last August that it never would have occurred to me or anyone else that all the wonderfulness might eventually produce a movie like *The Fortune. The Fortune,* I think, is pretty terrible—and it just goes to show that in California's flattering sunshine even disaster can have an alluring face."

For Nichols, worse was still to come. Three months after *The Fortune* opened, he began work on a new movie, an original screenplay by Neil Simon called *Bogart Slept Here,* starring Robert De Niro and Simon's wife at the time, Marsha Mason. But after less than two weeks of shooting, De Niro left the picture. He had reportedly fought bitterly with Nichols and with Mrs. Simon. Although Warner Brothers later tried to recast the movie with Richard Dreyfuss, Simon declared that by that time Nichols was "emotionally unable to go on with the movie." The film was never made.

It was a major public humiliation for the director who had been declared a genius less than a decade earlier, and it sent Nichols into a profound depression. He did not stop working—or making money. Even *The Fortune,* a huge financial flop, made Nichols a bundle; his unprecedented deal reportedly guaranteed him 10 percent of the movie's gross, from the first dollar collected. He was one of the executive producers of the TV series "Family," and he also presented *Annie* on Broadway after seeing it in summer theater—a venture that netted him over $2 million. In 1980 Nichols made $2.5 million more by selling thirty-two Arabian horses. But his artistic achievements were few and far between. He did not direct another movie for eight years, and he admitted it was a low period in his life, when he was creatively depleted.

As he explained to Barbara Gelb in 1984, "I really just felt dead mentally, jaded. I'd always loved rehearsing, but I could barely arouse my own interest. I must have been depressed without knowing it. I get more narcoleptic than scared when things aren't going well."

When he received a script about Karen Silkwood, who had died under mysterious circumstances while trying to alert the public to dangerous conditions in the plutonium-processing plant where she worked, Nichols began to come out of his depression. "I was interested in the theme of being asleep and waking up," he said. "It was, in fact, the situation in which I found myself at the time. I saw that Karen Silkwood was a zombie: she was asleep during her work, and then she began slowly to wake up. That was my central image for the character."

The opportunity to work with Meryl Streep also intrigued him, and she turned out to have as profound an effect on him as Elaine May had had thirty years earlier. "I'd lost a lot of the pleasure of directing," Nichols admitted. "Nor was I very good for a while. . . . I sort of went to sleep. Meryl woke me up. . . . She's an actual great actress. Nobody but Peter Sellers and Alec Guinness have tried to do what she's doing in films. Women have never been allowed to. They're supposed to be the same person every time, or people get mad. Meryl dares to be different in every movie." Nichols has worked with Streep three times in the last seven years. "I actually saw him cry after one of Meryl's takes in *Postcards from the Edge,*" Carrie Fisher reports. "He loves what she does."

Silkwood, a restrained but highly effective antinuclear tract, brought Nichols his third Oscar nomination. The next year he directed *The Real Thing* on Broadway and won his sixth Tony. During this period of professional retrenchment, Nichols's personal life was in turmoil. His third marriage, to the writer Annabel Davis-Goff, fell apart; he had two children with her and one grown daughter from an earlier marriage. By that time, Nichols had a long history of abortive romantic relationships. Many of them were with highly accomplished women, including Penelope Gilliatt and Gloria Steinem. But his marriage to Diane Sawyer in 1988 marked his first long-term relationship with a star of his own stature. It could be that Sawyer's own career rehabilitation, her transition from being a loyal press aide to Richard Nixon (who flew with him to San Clemente on the day he left the White House in disgrace) to being one of the most prominent journalists in America, gave her an intuitive sympathy and rapport with Nichols. "Everyone who loves Mike feels that it is a great finale for him to have finally found the woman of his dreams," says his friend Candice Bergen. "This is the moment he's been waiting for and which he had resigned himself to not ever having. It's hardly a marriage of convenience, though it would seem to be. They have passion, fun, stimulation, and a respect for each other. Many of us feel, Thank God he's taken care of. Now we can

worry about our other friends."

Nichols's directorial record in recent years is by no means an unbroken string of triumphs; his film of *Heartburn* and his stage revival of *Waiting for Godot,* with Robin Williams and Steve Martin, drew plenty of brickbats. On the other hand, *Working Girl,* released at the end of 1988, was his biggest hit since *The Graduate* and earned Academy Award nominations for Nichols as well as for the actresses Melanie Griffith and Sigourney Weaver. The movie has almost the identical strengths and weaknesses that Nichols had demonstrated twenty years earlier. Although Melanie Griffith gives an engaging performance as the ambitious but utterly earnest secretary, the most charismatic character—a cousin to Anne Bancroft's Mrs. Robinson—is the pretentious, icy, man-hungry executive played by Sigourney Weaver. The early scenes that show the scheming Weaver on the prowl are delicious satire. But just as Nichols dropped Mrs. Robinson to concentrate on the more ingratiating tale of young lovers trying to connect, in *Working Girl* he pushes Weaver into the background much too early, after she is injured in a convenient ski accident. Instead of an acid satire of 1980s greed, Nichols presents a likable, more familiar tribute to a good-hearted ingenue who grabs the brass ring.

The ending is every bit as confused as the ending of *The Graduate*. Nichols's most consistent critic, Pauline Kael, wrote perceptively, "We're supposed to be cheered by watching Tess become part of the establishment; she makes it into the world of mergers and acquisitions. Her victory is certified when she's ensconced in a cubicle high up in a skyscraper; on the sound track, Carly Simon and a women's choir sing exultantly. No, there's no irony—only fatuity." Well, to be fair, there may be a smidgen of irony. The final aerial shot of Tess in her office, surrounded by a depressing grid of identical cubicles, does put a slight damper on the mood of exultation. That concluding shot serves the same purpose as the close-up in *The Graduate* of a suddenly forlorn Dustin Hoffman. It does not quite undermine the dubious uplift that thrills the masses, but it allows Nichols to save face among the intelligentsia by proving that he knows Tess's victory may be hollow.

Endings have plagued Nichols in virtually every one of his movies, perhaps because he cannot decide whether to pander to his audience or challenge it. His childhood left him with a desire to succeed at any cost, a primal fear of losing his following, which could account for the slippery compromises in even his best movies. *Working Girl* also confirmed that Nichols will never be a great stylist. Although he uses some of the world's best cinematographers, like Nestor Almendros (*Heartburn*), Michael Ballhaus (*Working Girl* and *Postcards from the Edge*), and Giuseppe Rotunno (*Carnal Knowledge* and *Regarding Henry*), his films have never been visually memorable or inspired.

On the other hand, Orson Welles, who worked for him on *Catch-22* and was certainly aware of Nichols's limitation as a director of cinematic effects, said, "Nobody's in his league with actors." That judgment still holds. Nichols has drawn revelatory performances from a large number of actors, from Ann-Margret and Candice Bergen in *Carnal Knowledge* to Melanie Griffith in *Working Girl*. "He gives you the gift of self-confidence," Bergen says. "He makes you feel you can do anything he sets before you. That is something most directors don't have the slightest idea how to do."

Sometimes Nichols offered the most unexpected practical advice. In the scene where Bergen meets Art Garfunkel at a college mixer, Nichols asked her to try taking off her skirt and playing the close-ups in her slip. "It produced just the right edge of discomfort, the precise note of nervousness the scene demanded," Bergen explained.

When Maureen Stapleton was appearing on Broadway with George C. Scott in Neil Simon's *Plaza Suite,* she had a problem with one of Simon's laugh lines several months into the run. "I lost a laugh," she recalls, "and it was the easiest laugh in the world. George and I tried everything, and nothing worked. So I called Mike and asked him if he would come back and look at the show. He did, and afterwards backstage he said, 'Take the second half of the sentence an octave lower.' I did that the next night, and that did it. He can be incredibly specific. He doesn't muck around with extraneous crap."

"He can be impatient," notes Carrie Fisher. "But he always has a sense of humor. It never abandons him. He's an intense personality. He's very particular about what he wants. He will do it until he gets it, but he always gets it."

Postcards from the Edge, the screenplay for which Fisher adapted her own novel, is not Nichols's most honored film, but it may be his most purely entertaining. Watching it, one feels that the director has developed a brand-new ease and assurance. "He's never been more certain of himself or more in charge," says Jules Feiffer, who worked with Nichols in the theater last year. Some of his former fans may be disappointed that he is not probing deeper, but then they may be overestimating his gifts. Nichols was never the cinematic savior some critics wanted him to be.

Stanley Kauffmann, one of the most sympathetic of Nichols's critics, summed him up quite accurately when he wrote, "Nichols is still a man who essentially looks for things to do, not a man who essentially has things he wants to do, which is why he is not (and may never be) a major artist." Nichols is a gun for hire, not a trailblazer. But the sunny assurance of *Postcards from the Edge* suggests that he may now be fully in control of his strengths and cognizant of his limitations. *Postcards* is not a profound work, but it is almost indecently funny. It shows Nichols giving pleasure unapologetically—a talent not to be sneezed at.

Perhaps there was a time when he aimed higher. "I think it's true that Mike is doing things that are a little less risky today," says his friend Peter Stone. "It may be part of the aging process. You lose certain energies and gain others. Now I think Mike is very interested in making very successful pictures. But then he's offered every big picture, and he likes to keep working." In the 1960s he derided his own achievements by saying, "You know, none of the great movies has been a popular success." He cited Fellini, Bergman, and Truffaut as the filmmakers he admired most. More recently, he has revised his position. In his last extended interview, two and a half years ago, Nichols said, "Movies weren't 'artistic' to begin with; they were a pop medium. They went through an artistic period in the fifties and sixties because there were some artists making movies: Bergman, Fellini, Truffaut. We all got excited and said, 'Oh, look, it's art.' But that's sort of like Larry Adler playing the harmonica. He can play Bach on the harmonica. That should encourage the rest of us to sit by the campfire playing 'You Are My Sunshine' on the harmonica." □

A TALE OF TWO HOUSES

(Continued from page 66)

tory, Raine even sold the entire Spencer archives, filled with architectural drawings, to the British Library for £1 million (about $2 million).

Raine Spencer is a woman of extravagant contradictions. At one time she was chairman of the Greater London Council's Historic Buildings Board. In 1970 she helped produce a booklet called *Do You Care about Historic Buildings?*, in which she singled out Spencer House for praise. She admired the way that it had been sensitively converted into an office so that one day it could be turned back into a private house, should anyone wish.

Less than a decade later, she was making sure no one could ever turn it back into the Spencer House it was. She had begun selling off the furniture and paintings that had once belonged there—some, in fact, created for and around it. One of the most egregious examples was her sale of two seventeenth-century masterpieces by Guido Reni and Andrea Sacchi, for which an entire room (the Great Room) at Spencer House had been designed. The door frames had even been made to match the paintings' frames. Worse, both paintings went out of the country and can never be retrieved. The Andrea Sacchi is now housed at the Metropolitan Museum, in New York.

Raine Spencer's stepchildren have been understandably dismayed by her behavior. Four years ago, *Harpers & Queen* magazine published the results of tireless research into exactly which of the Spencer heirlooms had been sold off (see our update on page 62). Alexandra Artley, who wrote the article accompanying the list, remembers going to see Viscount Althorp, the heir to the earldom of Spencer, in his London office. Although he made no comment, he was interested in seeing the list and photocopied this record of the family treasures his stepmother had sold.

It includes eleven of the Spencers' twelve Van Dycks, two gold ice pails made in the late 1600s for the first duke of Marlborough (sold for $2 million), and a great number of other valuable paintings, many of which had been at Althorp for three hundred years.

There was also a set of Athenian Stuart chairs that belonged to Spencer House. The story of what happened to them may explain why the only people who love Raine are some of the Bond Street antiques dealers. To one expensive emporium, Partridge Fine Art, she gave six of the Stuart chairs (expressly designed for Spencer House in the late eighteenth century) in payment for their restoring the rest of the set without charge. Partridge sold two of his six to the Victoria and Albert Museum for £20,000 (roughly $40,000), unrestored; sold two to an American collector; and, having restored the other two, offered them in the shop at £75,000 (about $150,000). No wonder Mr. Clifford Henderson, of Partridge's, says, "She's highly professional and she's extremely knowledgeable. She has a tremendous number of her own ideas, and she's a great pleasure to work with."

Apart from a very few items that had gone to pay duties on Jack Spencer's death, in 1975, all the paintings Raine sold could have been exempted from taxes, provided they remained in situ. But with a seaside villa being designed in Bognor Regis, in West Sussex, where Raine will spend her widowhood should Johnnie Spencer predecease her, perhaps the cash was needed.

People might have begun to forget about Raine's transgressions, were the London offices of Jacob Rothschild not just opposite Spencer House in St. James's Place. Lord Rothschild, head of the English branch of his well-known family, had often cast an eye at Spencer House, noting its dusty plate-glass windows and generally tattered condition, and had wondered if its former magnificence could be recaptured.

Since Jack Spencer left the house behind, in 1927, it had just managed to hold together through neglect, war, and taxes. Virtually all the private town houses of England's aristocracy—many of them closer to palaces—that had lined Park Lane or stood back in Mayfair or fronted the Thames had been demolished. It was by sheer luck that Spencer House, among the most important Palladian palaces architecturally, had not.

In spite of Raine's published praise of Spencer House, it was, by the 1980s, in a depressed state. During the postwar years it had lost the last vestige of luster, with grand state rooms reduced by false ceilings, wired-glass doors between rooms, and partitions made for typists' pools and offices. Elevator shafts and Portosans filled the courtyard.

By the time the last tenant, the *Economist* magazine, was ready to leave, in the early 1980s, no one knew what to do with Spencer House. The freehold belongs in trust to the Princess of Wales, her two sisters, and her brother. There was some talk that the Prince and Princess of Wales might make it their London home, but that was impossible from a security standpoint. The house is exposed to the street (St. James's Place) and to Green Park. Besides, since the Princess's stepmother had already sold so many of its original contents, there was the rather pressing question of how to furnish it. The royal family was not likely to spend the estimated $32 million needed for refurbishment and repairs.

What was called for was a rich benefactor. But to suppose that such a man might actually exist seemed wishful thinking. Were the likes of King Edward VII's rich cronies still around?

Fortunately for lovers of architecture, the descendant of one of them was, at that moment, eyeing Spencer House. The English Rothschilds had long ago established themselves in sumptuous, stylish homes dotted about Mayfair and Piccadilly, houses often heavily decorated in crimson and gold, in what came to be called *le goût Rothschild*. So, it was altogether appropriate that Jacob Rothschild should take a liking to what had been the most opulent house built in London during the eighteenth century.

At fifty-five, Rothschild is a highly civilized man, who, apart from a brief stint as a banker, has spent his life as a dedicated aesthete and patron of the London art world. First he was a collector. Then, for a time in the 1970s and 1980s, he owned Colnaghi, the respected Bond Street art gallery that deals in old-master paintings and drawings.

Unlike some of his more flamboyant ancestors, Jacob Rothschild does not go in for the characteristic social profile but firmly keeps his own countenance. Recently, however, he has come to be more widely known because of his appointment as chairman of London's National Gallery. He now muses that he has "a lot of friends [he] never knew were there." With his new position has come a fascination with being seen in society, and he is not averse to having a young titled lady at his side, while his wife, Serena, remains at home.

Rothschild, it turns out, is also a very persuasive advocate for the arts. He charmed John Paul Getty into putting

£50 million (about $100 million) into the National Gallery extension plan, and in 1985 he negotiated a long-term lease on Spencer House with the Spencer family trustees. He did it because he was prepared to rescue what had come to be seen as a white elephant. But the fact that the charming Princess of Wales would be involved did not hurt.

"It will help my bank account," said Diana at the opening party for Spencer House last November. As a guest of honor, she made a speech and cut the ribbon that declared the house officially open. Her statement may have been delivered with a smile, but it had the weight of financial reality. All the improvements Rothschild has made to what is still the property of the Spencer heirs naturally add to their net worth.

Approximately five hundred guests appeared at the opening. They were mainly captains of industry, because the renovation of Spencer House is, for Jacob Rothschild, as much a matter of commerce as it is one of art. The house may be rented out by corporations for meetings and parties. Aristocrats were not much in evidence at the party, perhaps because the rates for renting Spencer House are beyond their budgets, but a few glamorous business peers were on hand.

Lord Rothermere brought his wife, "Bubbles," who seemed disappointed that she could not add her signature to the visitors' book beside the Princess's. There was also Lord King of Wartnaby, who as chairman of British Airways was ennobled by Mrs. Thatcher for exemplifying the virtue of "pulling oneself up by the bootstraps." Among the genuine aristocrats present were the Princess's two sisters, Lady Sarah McCorquodale and Lady Jane Fellowes—who with Diana will inherit a renovated Spencer House—and their brother, Viscount Althorp, with his wife, the former Victoria Lockwood, a fashion model. Notably absent was Raine Spencer, who had stayed at home and kept her husband there too, despite the fact that Spencer House is his family home.

It was not all fat purses and coronets at the party; the craftsmen who had worked on this brilliant restoration were there too, rubbing shoulders with the billionaires. And well they should, for they were a crucial element in this project. When he took on Spencer House, Jacob Rothschild enjoyed the double advantage of being aware he needed good advice and of knowing precisely where to find it.

He gathered around him England's leading architecture historians—among them John Harris, who created the RIBA's (Royal Institute of British Architects) stupendous drawings collection, and Gervase Jackson-Stops, the organizer of the spectacular "Treasure Houses of Britain" exhibition, which ran for four months at Washington's National Gallery of Art. These are people who confront the problems of restoration in grand houses week in and week out. Jacob Rothschild's goal was to bring Spencer House back to the splendor of the first earl's day. To re-create the atmosphere of that time, he consulted the interior designer David Mlinaric.

Of all the designers working in London today, Mlinaric is probably the one most familiar with the grand English background, despite his somewhat unorthodox beginnings. He launched his career in 1965 with a spectacular party that he designed for Lord and Lady Harlech (close friends of the Kennedys during their tour of duty in Washington) and their children. It was the first big social occasion at which lords and ladies mingled with painters and pop stars, such as the up-and-coming group that called itself the Rolling Stones.

After that historic party, Mlinaric began reviving country houses and London apartments, wooing his clients away from "those dreadful pastel shades" of London's favored decorators at the time. He became the darling of London's hippie aristocracy—a set of young, well-born people, like the young Harlechs, in rebellion against short haircuts and pinstripe suits—and threw memorable parties in his vast studio on Tite Street, which had once been the painter John Singer Sargent's. The filmmaker Michelangelo Antonioni was so attracted by the good-time aristos that he made a film about them—*Blow Up*—containing a party scene in which Mlinaric's circle sit on a sofa, smoking marijuana and giggling.

While many of his hippie friends failed to flower, David Mlinaric forged ahead. He taught himself a great deal about architecture and the historic background of design. That mixture of learning and inventiveness made him ideal for restoring Spencer House.

Even so, with twenty-five years of experience behind him, Mlinaric found the house an "extremely difficult" challenge. How, he asked himself, can the verve and grandeur of the eighteenth century be evoked without everything's looking fake? Restoration, after all, should make use of and convey the modern as well as the historical. Because so much was gone, guidelines were few. Paint scrapes, of course, could unearth original colors—except in the staircase hall, where new plaster had buried the evidence forever. This, in a way, was just what Mlinaric wanted—a chance to use what he calls "historical imagination."

"If there's no element of historical imagination rather than historical copying, then I don't think there's a job for a designer," he says point-blank, and then gives an example. "If you have a 1760 dining table and you find 1760 candlesticks for it, it usually looks wrong." Restoration of the eight principal rooms at Spencer House was carried out according to Mlinaric's philosophy.

At Althorp, Raine Spencer has seen no need to exercise historical imagination. Closing her ears and eyes to academic opinion, she has relied almost exclusively on her own judgment. This would be fine were she doing up a house in the *haute* suburbs of Surrey, outside London. But when hands are being laid on an important country house, whose look and feel have grown over hundreds of years, such guidelines can result in disaster. In many ways, they have.

Track lighting now spotlights the pictures in what was once a wonderfully mellow gallery. The floors are covered with wall-to-wall carpeting, as if to suggest a suite at a four-star hotel. Raine has gilded the brass of superb seventeenth-century lacquer cabinets (a move that is historically incorrect, if nothing else), picture frames, and dado rails.

Her appetite for gilt is so keen, an intimate has suggested, that the glare of gold would crack the lens of any camera. Lord Spencer does not see this as a problem. "The gilding may be a bit bright," he admits, "but in a hundred years' time, it will tone down."

Raine has also disturbed what was a rather witty arrangement of the Nollekens busts in the Great Hall. Once, William Pitt the Younger (the Tory) looked attentively at Charles James Fox

(the Whig) while Fox, appearing to ignore his political rival, gazed blithely out the window. Now both busts are stuck in dark corners, pride of place given to a marble head of a woman.

In *Do You Care about Historic Buildings?*, Raine Spencer wrote that "our children and grandchildren can respond, as we have, to the challenge of beauty created hundreds of years ago." Yet her policy at Althorp has ensured that Spencer descendants will never see that beauty as it was.

It is a tribute to Jacob Rothschild and to the team of craftsmen and advisers he assembled that, despite Raine's ill-advised sales of its furnishings, Spencer House restored makes for one of the greatest success stories in years. It was never forgotten that it is one of the most important buildings in London, marking a turning point in interior architecture. No decision regarding these interiors was taken lightly.

"It's a young man's house, full of optimism," says Christopher Gibbs, a leading London antiques dealer, who chose much of the furniture for Spencer House. Gibbs was also a guru of the hippie aristocracy of the sixties. It was in his apartment on Cheyne Walk, in Chelsea, that Antonioni filmed that party scene in *Blow Up*. In those days, he would walk through London in a brown-and-white-striped jellaba. Today his interests have spread everywhere, he has an encyclopedic knowledge of English families, and he is known for his informed and natural taste. On occasion he designs an interior, but only if he likes the prospective client and feels he can take time off from his three primary pursuits: the study of antiques, reading, and gossip. He is one of the very few friends of J. Paul Getty II (Getty says he needs only five), whom he advises on furniture.

Gibbs understands Spencer House with the perceptiveness of someone who can see the eighteenth century unfolding live before his eyes. "Harmony and scale is the most important thing to go for," he says of the furniture. "And remember, it's a Whig house, which means no chinoiserie or anything Japanese." (The Tories had a taste for things Oriental. Good Whigs, whose tastes were influenced more by the European Grand Tour, did not.)

Access to Althorp was urgently needed for the restoration of Spencer House, because almost all of the original furnishings that had to be copied—dado rails, skirting boards, and door overmantels—were there. Lady Spencer graciously permitted access—for a price. While craftsmen have been making visits there for the past three years, it can be said that their presence has been tolerated but not enjoyed. Perhaps things are improving; the chief wood and marble carver for Spencer House says that the chill has now gone.

But Raine's lack of public spirit has been observed before. When the "Treasure Houses of Britain" exhibition, of 1985–86, was being organized, a request to borrow one of the three Spencer family tiaras, which she uses, was refused. When the Prince and Princess of Wales made their special visit to the exhibition, the Prince observed in his speech that he was "sorry to see nothing on loan from [his] wife's family."

The staff of Spencer House are quick to point out, perhaps to keep the pathways smooth, that they have had the greatest cooperation from Lord and Lady Spencer, although other sources, it must be said, have been more generous. The Victoria and Albert Museum has lent back to the Painted Room the Athenian Stuart sofa and chairs, and the queen herself has lent two large paintings by Benjamin West. To replace the Guido Reni and Andrea Sacchi, a pair of large paintings by Cipriani have been installed. The paintings are politically appropriate; they were bought from Houghton Hall, in Norfolk, the home of the Whig prime minister Sir Robert Walpole. Later this year, the gilt pier glasses and tables, also designed by Stuart, will be installed in the Great Room of Spencer House, having been impeccably copied from those at Althorp. The chimneypieces are taking longer. The marble comes from Verona and Carrara, and much time had to be spent negotiating for it in local bars there.

Going over Spencer House today, only an expert would recognize the gaps. Before the restoration was started, thorough research was done on the history of every room. The result is a thick manuscript that indicates where furniture, paintings, and room furnishings originally were placed and what had become of them. A typical entry: "The original doorcases, by Vardy, were removed to Althorp during the last war and replaced by the present frames."

There was to be no skimping, as too often happens when government departments restore historic houses. J. Rothschild Holdings, of which Jacob Rothschild is chairman, has put $30 million or so into the renovation.

Spending was no problem. More than 5,000 books of twenty-three-karat English gold leaf (English is the top quality), each book containing twenty-five delicate leaves, have been used. Then there was the search for furniture. Year by year, it becomes more difficult to find good antique pieces, and prices are constantly on the rise. The center is no longer London but Paris and New York. A generous ceiling price of around £200,000 ($400,000) was fixed for each major piece, while the silk damask on the walls of some rooms and the generously billowing curtains everywhere have run into hundreds of thousands of dollars alone.

Spencer House is grateful for the loans. The Painted Room, with its Athenian Stuart furniture in place once more, seems a miracle. In the dining room now are a pair of gilt console tables thought to be by John Vardy's brother, Thomas. They left Spencer House as early as 1786, when the second earl inherited it. George, the first earl's son, was a quiet, reflective bibliophile, more interested in rare editions than in gilded furniture, so he probably considered them no great loss. These tables were tracked down through the Victoria and Albert Museum and Temple Newsam, a museum in Leeds.

At the opening party, the Princess of Wales had every reason to be pleased. While her stepmother has her own designs for Althorp, here at least some family pride can be regained. Spencer House is the only example standing in London of an eighteenth-century aristocrat's palace. Many fortunes were long ago invested at the gaming tables, but it remains a tribute to the more tangible spending of her ancestors.

Rothschild has shown us how to recover the best of London's heritage. Now there is talk of other London gems' rescue through private funds.

Should it not, moreover, be made prohibitively difficult for individuals to dismantle the national heritage? □

Additional reporting by Alexandra Artley

BAD CZECHS

(Continued from page 79)

crossings near here took two and a half million cars. That's five times the number there were in the year before the revolution. We just don't have the manpower to check on them. And once the tourist season comes, it's open season for the thieves." Rubaš says the antiques gangs function like Mafia drug rings, with the lowest-level operators—in this case, the men who commit the actual burglary—separated by several levels of middlemen from the ultimate bosses. And he says he suspects that some of the gangs have links to drug traffickers who use Czechoslovakia to move heroin, opiates, and pharmaceuticals from the Soviet Union to Western Europe.

The theft of religious artifacts from the churches is an especially heartbreaking phenomenon in the border areas that Rubaš oversees, part of the formerly German-speaking Sudetenland. After the Second World War, hundreds of thousands of Sudeten Germans, in whose name and with whose help Hitler annexed the region in 1938, were forcibly transferred to Germany, leaving villages and churches across the region abandoned. The industrialization and urbanization of the Sudetenland in the late 1960s left city centers filled with *paneláky*—rickety, leaking utilitarian concrete-panel apartment houses—and left even more churches abandoned. Today's young Czechs in the Sudetenland grow up in a cultural desert, surrounded by functionalist architecture of the dreariest sort. In many town centers, the smokestacks far outnumber the church steeples—a choking legacy of the low-budget industrialization of Communist-era central planners in Prague. In earlier times, at least the churches remained to open the eyes of local people to the importance of an aesthetically pleasing environment. "There were no museums here, and when I was growing up, the churches, with their antiques and their sculptures, were our museums," says Major Rubaš.

THE CATALYST OF ALL THIS THIEVERY is, ironically, Czechoslovakia's "velvet revolution," and the country's rapid embrace of democracy and a free market following the overthrow in December 1989 of the country's forty-one-year, gerontocratic Communist regime. While President Václav Havel and most of the fellow Czechs and Slovaks he led to freedom have used their newfound liberties to write and say what they like, to travel abroad freely, to start businesses, and to run for office, many ordinary citizens have found themselves squeezed by free-market economic reforms. With inflation already running at over 30 percent so far this year and unemployment on the rise from less than 2 percent of the work force to over 10 percent, leaving close to a million people on the dole, ordinary Czechs and Slovaks will do what they can to survive—including prostituting themselves over the border. Every Friday and Saturday evening in the Guertel, the heart of Vienna's red-light district, young Slovak women from nearby Bratislava step off yellow-and-white tour buses to earn an evening's fortune by selling their bodies; one evening's wages in Vienna's netherworld are worth a month's salary back home, thirty miles across the border. The very demise of the dread Statne Bezpecnost, the Communist-era secret police, and the reform of the economy have left Czechoslovakia in an economic free-for-all, and many cash-strapped Czechs faced with rocketing inflation and a rapidly devaluing Czech crown are selling whatever they can for a pittance in hard currency to keep themselves fed in hard times.

But the real culprit, one suspects, is communism—and the fatalism that let it spread here. By suppressing freedom to worship as well as denying the glories of Czechoslovakia's bourgeois past, the Communist system shattered a long-held appreciation of the country's cultural treasures. Four decades of repression under an aging Communist-party leadership and its tentacular bureaucracy did little to provide moral bearings for the average Czech. Since a mere appearance at a church service could wreck a promising career, spiritual and cultural values were severed, and right or wrong became merely a question of what one could get away with. As the ideological fervor of the Communist regime died down, a bribe here or there accomplished whatever needed to be done.

Essentially, Czechoslovakia is a country whose soul was torn out after the brutal crackdown in 1968, and succeeding generations have learned that sometimes it is better not to care about anything but one's own survival. As the Czech writer Zdená Tomanova said, when asked how people built themselves moral guideposts in the Communist era, "People can't live in complete amorality, you know. . . . What they did was acquire double morals, one with a public face and one with a family face. The first lesson little Czech children learned from their parents was never to repeat in nursery school what you heard at home. They used their public morality when it served them. But obviously in the end you pay a price, because your values become skewed."

In the recent past, things of value were hidden, so that one could avoid charges of being a corrupt bourgeois. When a Czech or Slovak emigrated legally or, occasionally, left on an official business trip, friends would give him or her a set of family silver, a portrait or miniature to take out of the country, either for safekeeping with an émigré relative in Switzerland or Canada or to be sold, with the proceeds deposited in a bank account abroad or sent back as remittance. The forty-one years of Communist rule all but eliminated private collectors from Czechoslovakia. There were few aesthetes like the eponymous hero of *Utz*, Bruce Chatwin's whimsical novel of an obsessed collector of Meissen porcelain set in pre–velvet revolution Czechoslovakia. Officially, private collections were labeled decadent, a bourgeois waste of time and effort.

"In most countries, people built collections from generation to generation, but in this country the relation of people to objects was broken and made only through institutions. The people who are really interested in art and who care about it are, frankly, poor. The big institutions, which under the damned Communist system were supposed to be the cultural heart of the people, are interested only in making money now," says Josef Malý, a private dealer.

The ramifications for the country were summed up by Professor Horyna. "These antiques and artworks, both public and private, are the Czech people's historical soul. As these objects disappear—whether from people's homes or from our museums and churches, and whether they are stolen or sold, really doesn't matter—we lose touch with our heritage. We talk about returning to Europe after forty years in the East, but if we don't stop thinking about what we can sell and for how much, we will become just a cultural colony of Germany and Austria." □

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reformation in the fine arts. In the early fifties Hartford paid to have two of his essays published in major newspapers. In them he decried "vulgarity" in art; he railed against Picasso for painting the "blank face of despair" and lambasted de Kooning for his nihilism. *Life* magazine ran a snide essay on the heir, with pictures of him surrounded by collections of "vulgar" art (Rouault, Miró, Picasso) next to "wholesome" selections from his own collection: Gauguin, Sargent, and a Hartford portrait by the budding artist Marjorie Steele. Hartford did more than philosophize. He purchased a tiny plot of land at the southern end of Columbus Circle, in Manhattan, and announced that it would be the site of the Huntington Hartford museum. The edifice would house his collection, providing a sanctuary where the public could retreat into realism.

Time dismissed the heir's views as "a three-lane, 40-mile-an-hour parkway between photographic realism and emotional expressionism—too pat to be persuasive." Even the marketplace judged him the fool. One of his essays appeared just as a de Kooning show was opening at the Sidney Janis Gallery; the show sold out. "I never had it so good," commented de Kooning, who was delighted with the free publicity.

Still, from a distance of nearly forty years, Hartford's condemnation of the Abstract Expressionists does not look quite as foolish as it did at the time. Some feel that Hartford's call for a return to realism was less a case of getting it wrong than of getting it early. "If today he launched something that gave realism a chance, it would work," contended one former museum director.

Others, though, feel Hartford's gallery was tainted by its patron's hand. "Hartford was a disaster," insists the art critic Hilton Kramer. "It would have been an interesting thing to have had a serious alternative view of twentieth-century art, but Hartford was just an ignoramus who wanted to repeal the twentieth century. Needless to say, that wasn't possible."

For the most part, Hartford's own collections would have been best suited for the drawing rooms of his childhood. He was given to nineteenth-century English painters, collecting the Pre-Raphaelites when they were considered a quaint anachronism. The one deviation in his otherwise antique sensibility was Salvador Dalí—but the heir's appreciation for the surrealist had less to do with ideology than with the artist's charm. "Dalí was the one person that really hoodwinked Hunt," said Marjorie. "Dalí told Hunt that he was the only one who had artistic understanding. It sounds ridiculous, but Hunt was an aspiring mogul, and you can't flatter a mogul too much."

Dalí had enough of a sense of his patron to understand that showmanship was crucial to making the sale, and Dalí was a master showman. He targeted Hartford for the purchase of his massive *The Battle of Tetuan* and virtually scripted a drama for the sales presentation.

Dalí arrived at his New York dealer, M. Knoedler & Co., a day before Hartford's appointment and had the painting cloaked by a curtain (he even sent a gallery assistant to Bloomingdale's for just the right fabric); then he and the head of the gallery, Roland Balaÿ, rehearsed the show. Two chairs sat across from the painting, one for Dalí and the other for Hartford. Balaÿ would stand; dealer and painter would face the curtained canvas in silence, waiting for the heir to react. When Hartford spoke, Dalí would say grandly, "Roland, go and stand next to the picture," and then, "Roland, pull the curtain."

"It sold the picture," said Balaÿ.

Like many men with too many projects, Hartford had an ardor for his aesthetic life that was not replicated in his personal one. Marjorie gave birth to a daughter, Catherine, in 1950; his first legitimate male heir, John, followed three years later.

Hartford had little time for his growing family; he was more interested in once again pursuing ever younger and ever prettier women. Once, when Marjorie returned to their London town house, she found another woman's clothes in her closet. "It was a humiliation that I couldn't take," she said.

In 1959, Hartford attempted to appease her with a 625-acre Bahamian isle just 500 yards from Nassau, called Hog Island. Renaming it Paradise, Hartford wanted to create a retreat where the architecture would be pristine, the talk smart, and the beaches and women beautiful: a sort of cross between Dumbarton Oaks and Saint-Tropez. The blueprints verged on the fantastic, showing eight hotels, yacht docks, and a 2,200-seat auditorium to be called the Marjorie Steele Theater. There would be no gambling, Hartford vowed, and no cars. The short span to Nassau would be crossed by boat; all transportation on the island would be provided by horse and buggy. But ultimately, even the promise of a tropical paradise could not buy back his marriage.

In February 1961, Marjorie settled her divorce, receiving $385,000 outright, plus two trusts for the children totaling $2 million. As Marjorie left the courtroom, reporters clustered around her. Was she satisfied with the settlement? "I did not marry him for his money," she told one reporter, "and I am not divorcing him for his money."

Marjorie proved her point within the year. In November 1961, she married a struggling actor, sacrificing her alimony. "Honestly, the money was an embarrassment," she told a reporter. "Put it this way: we had yachts. The yachts sailed away. So what?"

Just as Hartford's second divorce became final, his illegitimate son, Buzz, barged back into his father's life. On a whim, he drove to New York, checked in to the Plaza hotel, and called Hartford. At first, all was friendly. But when Barton said that he was less interested in money than he was in the Hartford name, things started to grow tense, particularly when Hartford continued to insist that he was merely waiting for his son to "get some respect, do something big."

Barton settled for $50,000 cash from his father, still holding on to the hope of winning the Hartford name someday.

BY THE EARLY SIXTIES THE HARTFORD name that Buzz so much coveted was being affixed to a half dozen projects scattered between New York and Los Angeles, including the top of the masthead of a brand-new magazine devoted to the performing arts, *Show*. The cover of the inaugural issue, dated October 1961, was an outlined numeral one, framing a collage of the cultural icons of the day: Louis Armstrong's trumpet, a television screen surrounding Gene Autry's shotgun, opera glasses, and a contact-sheet clip of Marilyn Monroe's Cupid's-bow lips, aflame with red lipstick. Inside, there was Martin Mayer on the fledgling ABC network, Robert Kotlowitz on Artur Rubinstein, and Kenneth Tynan on Orson Welles. Hart-

ford's main contribution was the "girl feature," a two-page spread that was a chaste version of Hugh Hefner's Playmate pullouts. The first girl featured was an exquisite brunette named Diane Brown, a model whom he met at a photographer's party. On one page the teenager was shown with her hair tousled, face freckled. Facing, she was bare-shouldered, a beehived sophisticate.

For much of the next year, Diane was constantly at Hartford's side, accompanying him as he dashed from New York to London to Paradise Island, where Hunt was developing his multimillion-dollar fantasy without a business plan. Had there been one, the bottom line would have been all too apparent: there was no way that revenues from a fifty-two-room hotel could support Hartford's investment.

But the project tumbled forward of its own momentum, as did Hartford's relationship with Diane. For Diane, who at eighteen had been given a ticket to New York by her father and instructed to find her way in the world, Hartford was an excellent catch. On October 6, 1962, she married him, convinced, like many before her, that she was the one who could make the heir behave.

By the middle of 1963, Hartford's bankers had bad news. After his uncles had died, in the fifties, A&P stocks foundered, losing a third of their value by the end of 1963. Loans for his various projects that Hartford had collateralized with A&P shares were now in danger, and his bankers ordered Hartford to liquidate.

Hartford always assumed that his money would be there when he needed it. And the idea of selling—which might have saved his fortune—was unthinkable, for any one of his projects could be the one that would lift him from celebrity to fame.

His bankers' panic, though, could not keep his museum on Columbus Circle, in Manhattan, from finally opening. The Gallery of Modern Art, Huntington Hartford Collection, made its debut in March 1964, four years late and with a price tag approaching $10 million—nearly five times more than the original projections. This time, Hartford's connoisseurship was more than a paid advertisement; it was a life's work, an oeuvre, that the heir hoped might one day do for the Hartford name what the Morgan Library and the Guggenheim had done for their founders. "I am disgusted with contemporary art in general," he said. "Ethics, morality, and art are all related, but today ethics are unfashionable." His museum, he promised, would redress the problem.

In the world, according to Hartford, a museum was "really like a church." He installed a twenty-three-and-a-half-foot-high Aeolian-Skinner pipe organ; its music pulsed through the galleries. The gallery furniture was upholstered in supple leather; floors were either parquet or covered with thick red-and-gold carpets. The effect was that of a nineteenth-century drawing room—sumptuous, rather overwrought, not unlike the collection the galleries housed. The pieces included some Corot and Courbet oils, an early Degas copy of Poussin's *Rape of the Sabines,* and works by Mary Cassatt, John Singer Sargent, and Reginald Marsh. Between the fourth and fifth floors were Hartford's two immense Dalís, *The Battle of Tetuan* and *The Discovery of America by Christopher Columbus*. The latter, commissioned specially for the museum, was typical of the artist's later work: a technically superb monument to kitsch. It was an expansive, steel blue canvas, twenty feet across, with a forest of crosses in the foreground. Front and center was a huge figure Dalí called "the Immaculate Conception." He had used his wife, Gala, as the model. Just beneath the Gala *cum* Christ, Columbus led his troops through the water, all of them nude but demurely sheathed by the froth of ocean waves. "This museum," Dalí told one reporter, with a sweep of his tooled-silver-head cane, "is magnificent. This museum is the vindication of the Dalínian prophecy of art. This is a historical event, because now the people of the world will start discovering the outstanding painting of the world."

"Dalí," added Dalí, "has never been presented better."

His praise was not echoed by the rest of the art world. "[There is] not . . . even a single other picture whose master is not better represented elsewhere, providing he deserves to be represented at all, in another American public institution," wrote the reviewer for *ARTnews*. "With the avowedly anti-modern pictures in his museum, Mr. Hartford has labored like the greatest of mountains to bring forth, what, on his own avocational Broadway, is called a turkey."

There was not much anyone could do to turn a museum into a business, but there was still hope for Hartford's other big cash drain: Paradise Island. In a last-ditch effort to make the resort profitable, Hartford petitioned the Bahamian government for a gambling permit. But the white colonialists who ran the Caribbean government concluded that the hapless heir could never make a go of it. They would give him a permit, they told him, only if he took a partner. Ultimately Hartford was forced to sell his interest in Paradise to the Mary Carter paint company (now called Resorts International), a group that at the time had ties to some rather unsavory characters. The deal took years to play out, and in the end it cost Hartford the better part of his fortune. He ended up with less than $2 million out of a $30 million investment.

While crises may strengthen some marriages, they can hopelessly tatter more-tenuous bonds. That is precisely what happened to the heir and his very young wife. Through the sixties Diane had her own life; there was an all-girl rock band, the What Four?, and reports of romances with a young lawyer and then Bobby Darin. There was a brief reconciliation in 1968 when a daughter, Cynara Juliet, was born, but it lasted less than a year. On June 10, 1969, Diane filed for a divorce, and a year later she went to Juárez, Mexico, to seal the split. "No, sir," she told a reporter who followed her to the courthouse, "I'm not getting married again for a long time to come."

Her departure destroyed the last semblance of stability in Hartford's life. As Hartford's friend Billy Hitchcock put it, "Diane was the only sobering voice in the wilderness. After she left it was all downhill."

Buzz Barton was part of all that. In the autumn of 1967, Barton had decided to go back to New York and, as he told a friend, "settle this thing with my father once and for all." He took a room in a hotel on East Sixtieth Street and contacted Hartford, who agreed to a meeting. Afterward, Barton called a friend with the good news. "He told me the deal was done, that Hartford finally agreed to give him the name," recalled the friend. But the next day, Hartford once again reneged. That night, Barton

went to a neighborhood gun store and bought a pistol. Sometime in the next two days—no one knew just when—he put the muzzle to his head and sent a bullet through his brain.

Huntington Hartford's son is buried in an out-of-the-way cemetery in Los Angeles. A single, unattributed line is chiseled in the shiny granite: "Love is the morning and evening star." In the end he did not get what he wanted most. The name on the gravestone reads EDWARD BARTON.

On May 21, 1974, Hartford made a last, desperate bid for youth by marrying, at his Beekman Place, New York, apartment, his latest girlfriend, Elaine Kay, a hairdresser who was a ringer for the actress Carroll Baker. Hartford made a score of last-minute phone calls, inviting relatives to the wedding. "There were all these strange people standing around," recalled one of the only cousins to attend, "and then this old family retainer came over to me—I don't remember her name—saying, 'Oh, don't let him do this.' " According to Hunt's daughter Cathy Hartford, then twenty-three, she and Elaine both took LSD the morning of the wedding. Elaine wore a low-cut white gown to the ceremony, with gilded straps crossing between her breasts. Her husband wore a mottled green dinner jacket, an ersatz Edwardian outfit that might have lent a certain panache to a much younger man. Hartford, pushing sixty-five, looked simply shabby—like an overgrown Little Lord Fauntleroy outfitted by the Salvation Army.

After he married Elaine, Hartford strove for a pretense of productivity, playing the role of a man under considerable pressures of worldly responsibilities, taking endless phone calls, and holding meetings about projects that would never get off the ground. After dark, he darted from party to party, driven less by a need to socialize than by the fear of being forgotten. "It was the kind of party where the only person you recognized was Huntington Hartford," sneered one chronicler of a particularly marginal evening.

One night, in September 1975, he was among the nearly 400 mourners who gathered at Columbus Circle for what was billed as a "museum cooling." The gallery had floundered from the start. Barely a year after it opened, Hartford announced he needed more funds, and finally, in 1969, he handed the museum over to Fairleigh Dickinson University in hopes that the New Jersey school could afford to keep the place open. Hartford had promised to contribute $100,000 a year to the gallery's budget, but he never came up with the cash. Even worse, according to the gallery's curator, the late Mario Amaya, paintings started disappearing from the gallery's walls. Amaya felt that the pictures bought for the museum should stay there, even though Hartford legally owned them. Amaya grew increasingly angry as he read of the prices the paintings fetched. In one auction, Sotheby's sold a Pre-Raphaelite Venus for $79,200 (a record for Pre-Raphaelite works). In another, the Dalí commissioned specially for the museum, *The Discovery of America,* went for $100,000, just a third of what it was reportedly commissioned for, but still it was cash.

"We never saw a penny of those proceeds," Amaya recalled bitterly. "Hartford claimed to be saving for the museum, but he never came up with any money."

By the midseventies, even the university had given up on the place. And at the wake, Hartford mourned what might have been. "What bothers me is that I got together one of the greatest collections of paintings ever seen here," he told the *New York Times* reporter as he surveyed the bare walls. "I sold them because I thought they were ignored. . . . There was no recognition. My God, you get discouraged."

Back at Beekman, the scene was reminiscent of the last days of Henry VIII; it was a palace rife with intrigue and petty jealousies. Elaine even commissioned a series of drawings to chronicle the fall of the House of Hartford; they looked like Bosches painted while the artist was on LSD. The two dominant figures were a full-breasted blonde (Elaine) and a craggy-faced old man clad in baggy pajama bottoms (Hartford). In one, he is being attacked by maggotlike masses of humanity; in another, Hartford and Elaine are bound by the genitals by an asp. The last in the series is a skyline of Manhattan, balanced on the back of a clawed reptile. One Beekman Place is silhouetted in front.

"I always thought someone would end up getting murdered in that house," said Whitney Tower, Jr., an heir to the Whitney fortune and the great-grandson of Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, founder of the Whitney Museum of American Art, in New York. Tower almost got it right.

Violence, irrational violence, descended on the Hartford house on January 18, 1980. Sheila Dowling was an eighteen-year-old whom Hartford had hired to be his "secretary," though her duties were never quite clear. Elaine had made it known that she wanted the teenager out of the house, but Sheila did not leave. That morning at six, when Sheila arrived home after a night out at Studio 54, Elaine and a friend were waiting for her in her bedroom, armed with knives.

"I ran to grab something to protect myself," Sheila later said, "and screamed loudly. We started fighting. . . . I went into the bathroom, and they knocked me to the floor and my hands were tied behind my back." They stripped her, Sheila said, and then Elaine left the room and came back brandishing a pair of scissors. "While one of them held me down, the other one shaved my head. Elaine held a knife at my throat and threatened to disfigure my face."

The scandal rocked the staid residents of One Beekman Place. Calling Hartford's tenancy "undesirable" and in violation of a house rule forbidding persons of "dissolute, loose or immoral character" to enter the premises, the board of directors commenced eviction proceedings. Hartford sold the triplex in mid-1983, and by November he and his entourage had finally "evacuated," in the words of one of the Hartford crew. The boxes, the beds, and the furniture were moved to a four-story town house on East Thirtieth Street. Here, his daughter Cathy and wife, Elaine, completely bottomed out on drugs. "After shooting for several days, [Elaine] indicated I wasn't yet a junkie, so I kept going, thinking I was strong enough to quit," Cathy recounted. "It got out of control, and I could only get dull needles. Within three months I had destroyed all my veins. I had done to myself in a month what had taken her three and a half years." One night in early June 1985, she was admitted to Manhattan's Bellevue hospital, and then to Hazelden, the rehabilitation center in Minnesota.

Her father, meanwhile, passed the summer in bed after breaking his hip in a fall. Although he could walk with a cane, he had little interest in leaving his town house to go out onto the sidewalks

of New York. "This is really like a prison, you know," Hartford said. "All you need are a few more bars on the windows."

IN 1985 JULIET HARTFORD WAS A SEVENteen-year-old beauty. Hunt's youngest daughter had her father's dark features, framed by a mass of ebony curls. In looks, she was the twin of the teenage Ed Barton; in spirit she had the gumption of her iron-willed grandmother Henrietta. It was left to Juliet to make a last effort to save her father.

It all started with a phone call. "Your father wants to go to dinner with you," his third ex-wife, Diane, told her daughter, who had come for the summer from the Swiss boarding school Le Rosey. "This might be the last time you see him—you'll regret it if he dies." A few days later she and her mother went to Thirtieth Street to pick up the old man to take him to dinner at the "21" Club. "It was the first time the three of us ever went out together," said Juliet.

"We went over there. He was dressed like I had never seen him before. He always went out with his pants rumpled. This time they were perfect. His shoes were perfect. He was standing there, and he looked so old and so sad. We sat down on the bed, me and him, and everybody stood outside and we were alone for the first time ever. I showed him my yearbook, the French play that I had starred in, to impress him, and it was just like incredible."

Three weeks later, Juliet returned. "He had forgotten all about '21,' all about everything. He was a wreck; people were smoking pot. It was the old scenario all over again. I went over to him, and he forgot who I was."

Then Hartford walked into the bathroom, and Juliet spotted him snorting lines of cocaine. "She came running in, crying, 'I'm never coming back, he's killing himself,' " said Hartford's nurse. "She was a little girl who wanted her father to be someone other than [who] he was."

Five months later, during her Christmas break, Juliet took action. Though she was too young to go to court herself, she persuaded her mother to ask the state of New York to appoint a conservator for her father's affairs.

Over the next months, psychiatrists trooped in and out of the Thirtieth Street apartment, charged with determining whether the old man was capable of handling his own affairs. Apparently they—and Judge Andrew Tyler—concluded he was. And so Hartford continued to live from one desultory crisis to the next.

On February 9, 1988, Elaine had a seizure, thrashing about uncontrollably. The attendant called the police, who arrested her for illegal possession of a controlled substance and took her downtown to Manhattan Central Booking. Later she was carted off to the Rikers Island jailhouse, where she remained for two months.

Cathy Hartford by now was out of the household. After her stint in Hazelden, she went off to Ireland, where her mother, Marjorie, had a cottage and artist's studio. In mid-1988, she settled on the Hawaiian island of Maui. It was like the sixties there, she said, artistic and spiritual. The island held true to that era in other respects as well; drugs and alcohol were abundant.

During the first week of June, Cathy was found on the beach, bruised and suffering from exposure. Her father was informed of her condition; he said he was not well enough to fly over. Before the week was out, Cathy Hartford was dead, at thirty-seven.

Hartford might not have been well enough to go to Maui to attend to his daughter, but he still managed the occasional party. He was regularly invited to nonevents, like the parties thrown by Baird Jones, a Wally Cox look-alike and peripatetic keeper of Andy Warhol's flame. And on June 16, 1988, Jones threw a party at Casey's Dance Hall & Saloon, a waning Upper East Side discotheque. The occasion: a show of Warhol's prints (a small Marilyn Monroe and a large pink-and-blue cow's head among them). The invitations, printed on yellow index cards, billed Huntington Hartford as a host, and the small print promised complimentary admission and mixed drinks.

The "host" came through the door just before midnight, leaning heavily on the arm of a young Hispanic man. The heir wore a heavy black-and-white tweed jacket, ill-suited to the warm summer evening. He stood perched in the corner for an hour or so, propped up by the side of the bar. He was not conversing much; he seemed barely aware of the guests. Huntington Hartford seemed less a celebrity than an artifact, a wax-museum dummy from a bygone age.

Two years later you could find him at still other parties. It was another social season. Baird Jones's invitations had dubbed Hunt Hartford host of a Friday night fête for the Beaux Arts Society, and the heir promised to attend. The society, founded in 1906 by a group of social sorts who had been students together in the Académie des Beaux-Arts, in Paris, had once been one of the city's tonier outfits. Of late, though, it had fallen on hard times and had recently been reincarnated as a sort of coed, geriatric Junior League, holding parties mostly at past-their-prime discotheques.

This event had been called for nine-thirty at the Red Zone; Hartford, hair matted, suit rumpled, turned up just past midnight. He tottered across the pulsing dance floor over to the VIP room, collapsing onto a sofa. Jones plied the heir with a series of not so young, not so pretty women, inserting one after the other into the heir's open arms. As one particularly withered blonde, her lipstick running askew like tire skids on a highway, teetered on his knee, the heir's hand crept from her waist up to her breast. She pushed it down several times, but she never budged from her perch.

Meanwhile, Jones snapped pictures of Hartford and the girls. The heir smiled as each flash went off, with a last, tattered hope that Instamatic celebrity might provide some measure of fame.

"I've seen him go through many wives and many fortunes and many drinks and many drugs," said Isabelle Dufresne, who had watched Hunt in action for years. "I just wish he had taken better care of himself. He was the number one millionaire, you know, but time changes. . . . The American Dream is not only the dollar in the bank; it's the quality of the soul . . . and if you indulge in drink, the soul gets cloudy."

That is one way to describe Hartford's demise. Another, more poignant perspective was offered by Huntington Hartford himself, published in the pages of his own *Show* magazine. "I have tried to use my millions creatively," he wrote. "The golden bird, coming to life, has sometimes wriggled out of my hand and flown away." □

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Valuations

REVERSAL OF FORTUNES

Speculators have always driven the art market—but never as hard as in the bullish eighties. Now that prices have leveled off, buyers of modern art may have paid too much; anyone waiting for the market to adjust may just keep waiting.

By Jerry Patterson

Buy good furniture, fine china, and rare books. When all is said and done, that looks like the smartest investment strategy for the decade ahead. But words of explanation—and caution—are in order.

The art market of 1991 is so severely damaged that you ought to be able to find bargains just by sifting through the debris, but that is not necessarily the case. The ashes are dotted with land mines, and even the sharp-witted investor needs to take a careful look at the situation before proceeding.

Taking a Bath: Anders Leonard Zorn's *Les Baigneuses* (1889, oil on canvas, 38¾" x 27") set a record price for a Swedish artist when it sold for £1,760,000 ($2,992,000) at Christie's London last March.

The boom in art prices began slowly around 1983, peaked between 1987 and 1990, and is clearly over—for now. Sales at auctions, art fairs, and galleries faltered this year and have remained flat.

The international auction houses now call those boom years an "exception" (although they never said that at the time) and have proclaimed a return to normalcy. Authorities have announced that speculators drove the boom, that those people (now widely criticized, although when they were spending money wildly they were just as widely admired) are now out of the market, and that a bright new day has dawned for "dedicated" collectors—for which read, long-term investors.

If you can get past the assumption that dedicated collectors somehow have money when speculators do not, there is some truth in that point of view. It's just those annoying land mines.

One that many people have tripped over is the danger of investing in "shallow" markets, those created by the buying decisions of only a few people or, at times, of a single collector. Take the case of paintings by Scandinavian artists of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The leaders of a suddenly soaring market were the Swede Anders Leonard Zorn, a giant among northern European painters during his lifetime (1860–1920), whose reputation was revived during the past decade; his fellow Swede August Strindberg (yes, the playwright, and his paintings are as gray and gloomy as his dramas); Carl Larsson (often referred to as "the Norman Rockwell of Sweden," a description intended as a compliment); the Norwegian Nikolai Astrup; the Dane Vilhelm Hammershøi; and the Finns Albert Edelfelt and Helene Schjerfbeck.

The market for these and other northern painters hyperventilated almost overnight. In 1987, prices reached $1 million per work for the first time; three years later a Strindberg sold for $4.1 million. The auction houses gave the Scandinavians their headiest treatment. Sotheby's and Christie's in London, Rasmussen's in Copenhagen, and Bukowski's in Stockholm launched special sales composed entirely of northern paintings, with full career notes on the artists in the sale catalogs, traveling exhibitions, and considerable publicity. Enthusiasm seemed to stretch from New York (where there turned out to be lots of Scandinavian paintings in old American collections) to the Arctic Circle.

Then, in the autumn of 1990, catastrophe struck. At a

w: These studies by Leonardo Vinci, ca. 1500–06, went for .63 million at a 1986 auction. the same year, a Jasper Johns sold for an identical price.

Pèse Cheveu **(1962, oil on canvas, 76″ x 59″) was one of at least 141 Jean Dubuffet works sold at auction in 1990. The price was $5.17 million.**

Sotheby's New York sale of Scandinavian paintings, an embarrassing 86 percent of the pictures failed to sell. The entire sale brought only $1.5 million, less than the presale estimate for one lot, August Strindberg's *High Sea,* which alone had been expected to go for $4 million to $5 million.

Scandinavian economic difficulties were blamed, but the real weakness was the remarkably thin base of buyers.There are no real collectors of Scandinavian art, it seems, outside Scandinavia, and not many there.

Hans Thulin, a Swedish businessman, had been the main factor in the gale-force buying. (A busy shopper throughout the decade, he had also bought contemporary American paintings at record-breaking prices, and a $10 million Bugatti.) Once Thulin and a handful of others dropped out, the entire market collapsed. One Norwegian painter survived the debacle: Edvard Munch. But he is considered one of the Postimpressionist giants rather than a regional artist. An international following keeps his prices high.

A lot of investors learned an important lesson: shallow markets collapse first, and any recovery is apt to be slow.

When the Scandinavian market began to rise, there suddenly seemed to be a lot of Scandinavian art to buy, which is another common hazard for the investor these days. Rarity is so hard to find.

For a long time, the art world has considered scarcity and desirability almost synonymous. But one of the side effects of the 1980s boom was that it brought an overwhelming supply of artwork onto the market. Collections that had been assumed to be locked up until the Second Coming were suddenly available for sale, and museums deaccessioned works that had been thought permanently off the market. As

a result of the Tax Reform Act of 1986, which made it less advantageous for rich collectors to donate their possessions to museums, universities, and libraries, many pieces of art were sold on the open market instead. High prices shook countless objects loose.

As a result, the market is suddenly more than well supplied with works of art, including many that, not so long ago, would have been thought of as rare. There seem to be fewer and fewer artists about whose work an owner can boast that "there are only *x* number of these in the world." If masterpieces suddenly seem to be coming out of the woodwork, that is just because they were unavailable before. Some of the biggest names in art history, it turns out, were very prolific. Pierre-Auguste Renoir, for example, completed at least 4,000 paintings in the course of his career. Vincent van Gogh, in a flurry of productivity, painted some sixty canvases during the last ten weeks of his life. Nine major paintings by Claude Monet were offered in one sale during the boom.

Contemporary artists overwhelm prospective buyers with their output as well: 141 paintings and watercolors by Jean Dubuffet were sold at auction last season alone, 21 of them for over $1 million each. This is testimony to the deep pockets of the Japanese collectors who chiefly support Dubuffet's market; one is said to own more than 1,000 works. A total of 114 works by Jean-Michel Basquiat came to public auction last season.

Paintings are not the only plentiful medium. Season after season, the auction houses offer silver by Paul de Lamerie and Paul Storr, works by the Fabergé shops (there are an estimated 250,000 pieces of Fabergé in the world), and letters and documents signed by George Washington (thirty-one at American auction houses last season) and Abraham Lincoln (forty-four). And those are the figures for public sales only. Dealers account for at least as many.

Rarity was not the only factor challenged in recent years. The investor can no longer be certain how the market is going to assess artistic reputations in the future, especially now that the old hierarchy of art values has been turned on its head. Once upon a time, an old master was an old master, and that was that. Generations were taught that Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, Michelangelo, and Rembrandt were the greatest artists in history. Because their works come up for sale with relative infrequency, it would follow that they would be highly esteemed by the market.

Between 1987 and 1990, however, money was bet that there simply are no eternal verities in art. Prices for works by these old masters, however rare their appearance on the market might be, have lagged behind those for contemporary American artists, let alone the French Impressionists and the Postimpressionists. During the 1980s you paid more for a Jackson Pollock than for a Rembrandt.

You also could pay the same for a Leonardo da Vinci as you would for a Jasper Johns. In 1986, one of the two remaining unquestioned Leonardo works in private hands—*Three Sketches of a Child Embracing a Lamb*—owned by John Gaines, heir to the dog-food fortune, went on the block. It was sold at about the same time as Jasper Johns's *Out the Window,* painted in 1959. Both works went for exactly the same price: $3.63 million. The private buyers had changed the rules.

In a recently compiled list of the 100 top items ever sold at auction, no fewer than 89 are paintings produced since 1870. Eighty-five of those are by Impressionists or Postimpressionists; the other four, by Abstract Expressionists. Only five old masters—a Pontormo, a Renaissance bronze by Adriaen de Vries, a pair of Venetian views by Francesco Guardi, a Rembrandt, and an Andrea Mantegna—make the list at all.

While private collectors appear to ignore art history, museums still pay homage to the eternal verities by propping up the market for old masters. In January the Italian government bought a 1503 Raphael drawing, *Saint Catherine of Alexandria,* for the Uffizi, in Florence. Both the purchase and the purchase price of $1.65 million were widely criticized, because the 15-by-5⅝-inch panel was severely flood damaged while in storage in 1966 and is generally considered unrestorable. Christie's New York had expected the panel to bring only $800,000 to $1.2 million. Still, the buyers can argue, a Raphael is a Raphael and the price has to be considered a bargain, compared with the $4 million reportedly paid by its most recent owner, Imelda Marcos.

Ultimately, timing is everything—and this is not necessarily the time to buy. The investor naturally wants to come in when the market is at its lowest, and, although badly shaken, it is far from the bottom today. Sale totals for the two big international auction houses, Sotheby's and Christie's, were down by 50 percent during the autumn of 1990, but alert observers noticed that, while many paintings failed to sell, very few were sold at sacrifice prices. Sellers were still insisting on high reserves on paintings offered at the big evening sales.

The reserve, of course, is the minimum price a seller will accept for a particular item. This magic number is usually a well-guarded secret shared only by the seller and the auction house. The auction houses say that they urged owners to reconsider—that is, to lower—reserves, but almost nobody was listening. There were few signs of substantial concessions to the reality of a troubled market.

A rare exception to that was the sale of Robert Rauschenberg's important *Third Time Painting,* owned by Robert E. Abrams of the New York publishing family. Shortly before the sale, the estimate was lowered from $4 million to $5 million to $3 million to $4 million. The reserve, which is based on a percentage of the estimate, presumably went down correspondingly. The consequence was that, while other major works were dying, that Rauschenberg sold for $3.08 million. Very few other owners, however, were so clear-eyed about the state of the market.

From the collector's and investor's point of view, the theoretical solution has always been simply to buy "good art," works that will transcend the whims of fashion and stand the tests of time. This leads us to the inevitable questions: What makes art good, and who gets to decide? It is probably safe to say that technical achievement in art will always be valued and will always be rediscovered. Beyond that, there is only educated opinion, and that is constantly changing.

Meanwhile, decorative arts may be the answer. At least, investors are well advised to look into them for long-term investments. While the prices of furniture, ceramics, silver, and rare books seldom explode the way those of paintings sometimes do, they also seldom fall as far or as rapidly. Paintings decline first, followed, after a substantial period of time, by the decorative arts. Buyers seem to be saying to themselves that they can always sit on a Sheraton chair, eat off Meissen, or read a first edition. If the investment value turns

out to be less than expected, at least the object has some functional value.

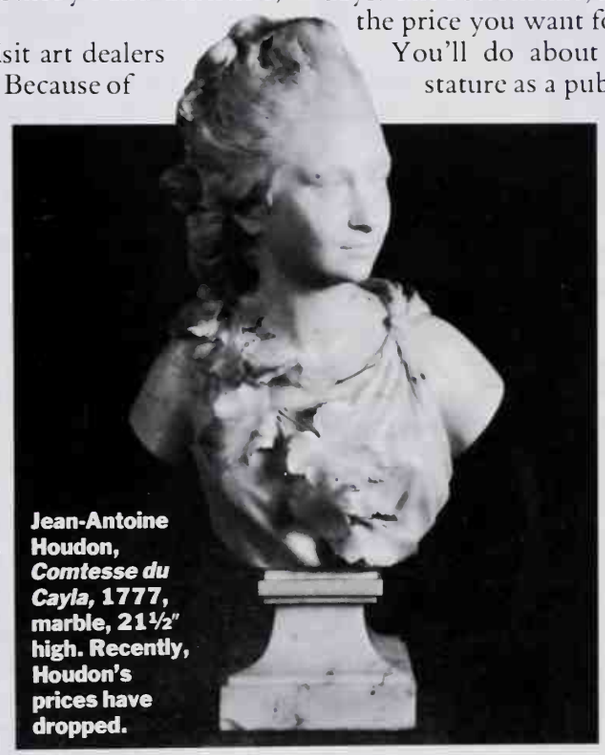
If you want proof, consider these 1990 figures from Paris. At the Richelieu headquarters of the Hôtel Drouot auction house, where moderately priced and useful antiques are sold, basic sales went up by 38 percent. At the Avenue Montaigne showcase, where the prestige auctions of Impressionist and contemporary art are held, sales dropped by 52 percent. When Greta Garbo's estate was sold in New York last year, some of the paintings failed to sell or brought prices below their estimates, but the furniture from her Sutton Place apartment sold for higher prices than expected.

In the last few years, interest has been concentrated in the upper reaches of the art market, inevitably in paintings, where prices came to resemble unidentified flying objects. During the late 1980s, people said there were high prices for "the best" (meaning, as always, the most expensive), but the so-called middle market had not gone anywhere. Now the middle market is surprisingly strong, while the top has sharply deflated. In London, Bonhams auction house, which specializes in objects priced from about $400 to $20,000, sales rose by 24 percent. Across town, at Sotheby's and Christie's, they were dramatically lower.

Investors would also be wise to visit art dealers now and browse through their stock. Because of flagging sales, more and more dealers are sending paintings and objects, many of them shopworn, to auction. Last fall very few buyers seemed to want those items, a fact that contributed mightily to the high rates of buying-in (that is, items going unsold and then being returned to the consignors). Now many dealers are nursing stock expensively acquired during the boom. They may be willing to part with things at bargain prices, especially if hard times continue.

This will not happen with everything, of course. A certain number of fine objects will be frozen off the art market while owners wait to see what happens, but there is no fear that others will not be offered. Estates usually have to sell, often to pay taxes, and executors rarely have the luxury of sitting and waiting for better times. During the Great Depression, in the 1930s, auction houses went great guns. They may not have been getting record prices, but a lot of goods were being sold.

No one knows yet how the newest federal legislation will affect the art market (see "Giving and Getting," on page 115), but it does restore, at least temporarily, the tax benefit of donating art to public institutions. Collectors may now deduct the gift at full appreciated value, just as in the good old days. The bottom line, at least for the moment: if you can't get the price you want for your Picasso, give it away instead. You'll do about as well financially—and gain new stature as a public benefactor. □



Jean-Antoine Houdon, *Comtesse du Cayla*, 1777, marble, 21½" high. Recently, Houdon's prices have dropped.

THESE NEVER CAME BACK

Conventional wisdom has it that all areas of art collecting suffer occasional eclipses but eventually return to favor. English Victorian paintings are often cited as a case in point, as are Italian majolica and Japanese color prints. But there are many other areas that were once popular and high-priced and have never made a comeback: English mezzotints, Dorothy Doughty Royal Worcester porcelain birds (up to $20,000 in the 1960s, now $3,000 to $4,000), first editions of John Galsworthy novels. You may need to wait awhile for these to be good investments again.

In the 1920s, Lord Duveen, considered one of the greatest art dealers of the twentieth century, used to sell portraits by John Hoppner (of noblemen, noblewomen, and noble children strolling in stately parks) to American millionaires for prices as high as $100,000 in gold. That would be something like $2 million in today's purchasing power. When the Depression hit, a decade later, Hoppner prices fell to a range of $3,000 to $5,000. Even in today's inflated currency, his portraits can barely make $40,000, which means, as investments they are goners.

At the same time, Duveen and other dealers encouraged a taste among millionaires for marble busts by Jean-Antoine Houdon (1741–1828). In 1916 the Parisian art gallery Gimpel sold the sculptor's *Comtesse du Cayla* to Henry Clay Frick for $200,000—say, $4 million in today's terms. No bust by Houdon, even those he made of Thomas Jefferson and George Washington, could bring that kind of money today. A typical recent price: $83,000 for *Bust of Youth Crowned with Myrtle*, sold in 1986.

BUT HE DID

If you had lived in London or Paris at the turn of the century, and if you had owned a Murillo, you probably would have been the envy of your fashionable friends. You also, most likely, would have been quite rich.

Bartolomé Esteban Murillo (1617–1682) painted religious allegories, often of immense size, and scenes of Spanish peasant life. Throughout the nineteenth century and up until the First World War, his work was the object of a vogue, almost a cult, among British and French collectors. Whenever one of his paintings was sold at auction, it was certain to be at the top of the price list. Murillo's prices were, in fact, on a par with Rembrandt's.

A long period of neglect ensued, perhaps because religious subjects were no longer in favor. Topics in art do go in and out of fashion, just as they do in other fields, with resulting ups and downs in prices. In 1935, for example, Murillo's *Portrait of St. Francis Xavier* sold for $2,000. Then, in the 1980s, his market recovered dramatically. There was a new recognition, partly led by art historians, that Murillo had indeed been a great artist. From a technical aspect, at least, one thing could be observed simply and directly: his paintings were very well painted.

In 1985 the Louvre bought his *Gentleman of Seville* for $1 million. Two years later his *Virgin and Child* brought the same price at a London auction. In 1989 *The Virgin of the Swaddling Clothes* sold for $2.8 million. And last December, in a lackluster market, *Saint Joseph and the Christ Child* sold at Christie's London for $4.8 million.

Collectibles

A rare sixteenth-century iron *tsuba* with mixed-metal inlay.

GETTING THE UPPER HAND

When the samurai of ancient Japan went into battle, their sword hands were protected by an iron guard called a tsuba. *Now these highly prized objects, as beautiful as they once were utilitarian, are collected avidly.*

By Andrea DiNoto

He was tall for a Japanese, just under six feet. . . . He wore a burnished breastplate and steel arm protectors. Only the short sword was in his belt. The other, the killing sword, he carried loose in his hand. He was ready to unsheathe it instantly and to kill instantly to protect his liege lord. —*from* Shōgun, *by James Clavell*

When the samurai brandished his sword in battle, his hand was well protected by the *tsuba*, a metal disc that fitted snugly at the juncture of the hilt and the blade. The sword itself, for centuries recognized as an edged weapon of incomparable strength, balance, and purity of design, has long been collected as representing the epitome of Japanese art and craft. Most of the great museum collections in this country were acquired in the late nineteenth century, but the hundreds of thousands of swords and sword fittings now available to American collectors were brought back as souvenirs after World War II. Sword collecting appeals mainly to those interested in war and weaponry, but sword fittings like the *tsuba*, which completed and enhanced the samurai's handsome gear, are small, beautiful, available, and affordable. While a warrior might have had no more than a pair of swords, he could have many *tsuba*. A heavy iron one was slipped into place for battle; a delicately decorative one, for ceremonial occasions.

Tsuba have the charm of small-scale, emblematic sculptures, ranging in size from about an inch and a half to four inches in diameter. Most *tsuba* are round, oval, or petal shaped; all have a triangular central opening, called the tang hole. The *tsuba* slides over the tang and abuts the slightly wider blade. The hilt is then slipped into place, securing the *tsuba*. Additional holes were made to hold small utility knives or hairpins that kept the samurai's topknot in place.

With patterns and designs on either side, *tsuba* are a pleasure to handle. "Sword blades should never be touched, for fear of rust contamination," says the San Francisco dealer Cary Condell, "but *tsuba*, particularly iron *tsuba*, are different. Handling may actually enhance their subtle patina."

Their fascinating history parallels that of the sword, casting light on Japanese metalworking techniques over a couple of thousand years. The earliest *tsuba* have been found in burial dolmens dating from before the sixth century A.D. In the ninth century, the samurai came to power, and the ornamentation on the sturdy handguards they fitted to their swords provides clues to their tastes and sensibilities. If war and violent death defined the samurai's life, the imagery of the *tsuba* addressed his philosophical nature. Snowflakes, plum blossoms, the moon reflected in water, and other classical motifs offered the warrior objects of contemplation suggesting the ephemeral nature of existence and his oath of service to his lord.

As the feudal system ended, between 1868 and 1912, the samurai lost their prestige. In 1871 it was forbidden by imperial decree to make swords for other than ceremonial purposes; in 1876 the very wearing of swords was banned. *Tsuba* were henceforth no longer made to be worn.

Collectors distinguish between utilitarian iron *tsuba* (*tsuba-ko*), originally made by sword smiths and armor smiths for use in battle, and soft-metal *tsuba* (*kinko*). *Kinko tsuba* are distinguished by the use of exquisite precious-metal alloys, primarily *shakudo*, a mixture of copper and gold patinated to blue-black, and *shibuichi*, primarily copper and silver patinated to

A large iron *tsuba*, early seventeenth century.

shades of gray. These luxury objects were created for ceremonial presentation or as gifts, becoming popular first with the aristocracy and then with the merchant class that developed in the seventeenth century.

Virtuoso craftsmanship notwithstanding, some *kinko tsuba* made in the late nineteenth century, heavily ornamented with gilt and inlay work, are considered rather decadent by *tsuba* enthusiasts. Prices above $20,000 have been paid for such pieces. "These are not sword guards," says Condell, "but works of metalcraft. Though the format is that of *tsuba*, they are more closely related to Japanese decorative arts like netsuke and lacquer work."

Iron *tsuba* from an early period are highly esteemed by collectors, who, like Dr. Henry Rosin, are "interested in the history of men in war" but at the same time appreciate the formal qualities of the early pieces. Rosin began collecting *tsuba* in 1957, when he was in the air force in Japan. He eventually acquired an extensive collection, including nineteenth-century soft-metal *tsuba* that rival Fabergé objects.

Tsuba are valued for pure aesthetics and for their age, their rarity, and the fame of the artists who made them. The art flowered during the early fourteenth through the early seventeenth centuries, when Japan was torn by one civil war after another. Many schools evolved, each contributing distinctive stylistic innovations. In the iron-*tsuba* category, the *sukashi*, or cutout technique, is greatly prized, as is the Heianjo style, which features brass inlay and engraving. Among the works of the several *kinko tsuba* schools, that of the seventeenth-century artist Umetada Myōju is legendary. He specialized in a painterly inlay technique, using alloys, and could sometimes produce as many as ten different colors on a single piece. At the Sotheby's December 1990 auction of Japanese works of art, a *tsuba* attributed to Myōju estimated at $3,000 to $5,000 sold for $66,000. Noting the questionable attribution, Nyr Indictor, the Sotheby's expert in Japanese art, said, "You cannot really express an attribution with confidence until you've seen a hundred works of a single artist." The buyer of the Myōju obviously had no doubts. "It was a good, strong price for a real Myōju, but not outrageous," says Indictor.

Many *tsuba* are signed, a good portion of these spuriously, but only those who read Japanese, have learned makers' marks, or know how to use reference books can read them. Beginners are at a tremendous disadvantage because they are competing with Japanese who have been collecting with renewed interest for fifteen years. "Let your first purchase be books, not *tsuba*," advises Henry Rosin. Study and handle as many *tsuba* as possible, go to museums, join a collectors' association (see Sources), consult with specialized dealers (whose numbers are dwindling); then, as you gain expertise, you will recognize fine *tsuba* anywhere—at auctions, where prices range from the hundreds to several thousands—at flea markets, and at gun shows.

Collectors agree that the best pieces are never found in stores or in galleries, because they are immediately sold privately through a well-established network of connoisseurs with want lists. On the other hand, "anything can be anywhere," says one experienced collector of swords and *tsuba*, who acquired an eighteenth-century dragon-motif *tsuba* for $175 at a flea market, though it might be worth over $1,000. In researching the signature, he found that the piece had been made in the province of Choshu around 1740. This collector, who buys for purely aesthetic reasons, maintains that "there are treasures to be found under $1,000 for those with in-depth knowledge."

In evaluating *tsuba*, condition is crucial. Avoid pieces with obvious damage or a lot of rust, and avoid any piece with a casting seam around the edge—it may be a reproduction. Iron *tsuba* should have a lustrous, natural black patina, which should never be removed. Lead plugs in the tang holes are acceptable. They were put there to fit the *tsuba* to a particular blade. Side holes that have been filled in are also acceptable. When storing *tsuba*, wrap them separately. Collectors sometimes preserve and exhibit them in specially made boxes, whose covers may bear collectors' notes or expert attributions (*hakogaki*). □

A busy samurai, from *Album of 47 Ronin Prints*, by Tsukioka Yoshitoshi (1839–92).

Sources

Dealers: California (San Francisco): Cary Condell, 415-751-3784. Hawaii (Honolulu): Bushido, 808-536-5693. New Mexico (Santa Fe): Skip Holbrook, 505-988-4263. New York City: Flying Cranes Antiques, Ltd., 212-223-4600; Ronin Gallery, 212-688-0188. Paris: Robert Burawoy, 011-3314-329-8904.

Auctions: Sales of Japanese swords and sword fittings; sales of Japanese art and artifacts, several times a year at major galleries here and abroad.

Associations: Japanese Sword Society of the United States, P.O. Box 712, Breckinridge, TX 76024. Annual meetings, newsletter.

Museums: Boston: Museum of Fine Arts; San Francisco: Asian Art Museum; Chicago: Field Museum of Natural History; New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art; Tokyo: National Museum; Kyoto: National Museum.

Books: *Early Japanese Sword Guards: Sukashi Tsuba*, by Masauuki Sasano; *Japan: The Shaping of the Daimyo Culture 1185–1868*, edited by Uoshiaki Shimizu (National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.); *The Japanese Sword*, by Kanzan Sato; *Tsuba and Japanese Sword Fittings in the Collection of the Cooper-Hewitt Museum*, catalog essay by Henry Rosin; *The Samurai Sword*, by John M. Yumoto.

Book dealer: Rare Oriental Book Company, Aptos, California; fax: 408-761-1350.

galleries

GENETIC AESTHETIC

CONTEMPORARY ART IS NO LONGER THE SPECTACULAR commodity it was two years ago, which may be a good thing for the art world. While the market shakes itself out, some young galleries are perishing, but others are proving themselves serious and responsible venues and are digging in for the long haul. So it is with the Greenberg Wilson Gallery, in New York's SoHo. In its first three years, the gallery has exhibited innovative and provocative work, ranging from Mary Lucier's video installations, to James Hill's folk-art-influenced objects, to the surrealistic canvases of Elinore Hollinshead and Tyler Turkle's curtains made of poured acrylic paint. This month, the gallery hosts a show of abstract paintings by Nicholas Howey.

The gallery's co-owner Sarah Greenberg admits that she has been somewhat influenced by her father, the once feared art critic Clement Greenberg, who championed Abstract Expressionism in the 1950s and the "color field" painters of the 1960s. But Greenberg and her partner Mark Wilson have taken a more eclectic approach to art than Greenberg's doctrinaire father. "They show a little bit of the traditional Greenbergian-type painting," note Richard Milazzo and Tricia Collins, a curatorial team that recently helped the gallery organize a show of Sal Scarpitta's race cars in conjunction with Leo Castelli. "But they combine it with works by younger artists and installations."

"We want to be known as a gallery that takes risks, that's willing to show noncommercial projects," says Wilson, who admits to having a hard time thinking of himself as a salesperson. "It's funny," adds Greenberg, "we tend to get kind of shy just at the moment when we should be out there shaking hands with collectors." Perhaps this soft-sell technique will appeal to the suspicious and battle-scarred contemporary-art collectors of the 1990s. —D. P.

(The Greenberg Wilson Gallery, 560 Broadway, New York City.)

Above: **Tyler Turkle, *Curtain*, 1990; poured acrylic; 84″ x 65″.**

Left: **Greenberg Wilson Gallery's owners, Sarah Greenberg and Mark Wilson.** ***Above:*** **Nicholas Howey, *Long Measure*, 1991; acrylic on canvas; 67″ x 51″.**

Richard Hamilton, *04.3.81 c, Self-Portrait,* 1990; oil on cibachrome on canvas; 29 ½" x 29 ½".

THE CHINA SYNDROME

ONE VESTIGE OF LONDON'S FORMER IMPERIAL SPLENDOR can be found in the British capital's tremendous concentration of Asian-art galleries—after all, the treasure hoards of Hong Kong, India, and other far-flung outposts eventually came back to the home front. The city remains headquarters for at least three of the world's leading dealers in Chinese antiquities: the recently expanded Bluett & Sons Ltd., Christian Deydier's Oriental Bronzes Ltd., and Eskenazi Ltd., all located within walking distance of one another in the districts of Mayfair and Piccadilly. This summer, the three galleries are all staging exhibitions that highlight the tremendous range of available Chinese work, stretching back across thirty centuries.

Ironically, the English no longer purchase much high-end Oriental art themselves. "The English gave up buying Chinese artifacts in large amounts after the Second World War," says Anthony Carter, the managing director of Bluett. "By the 1970s, the English market had almost completely dried up." Philip Constantinidi, a director of Eskenazi, con-

(Continued on next page)

A Song dynasty (960–1279) statue of Guanyin, crafted from stucco, at Bluett & Sons.

LONDON CALLING

IN THE SIX YEARS SHE HAS OPERATED LONDON'S Interim Art Gallery, Maureen Paley has become known for a severe style that can be seen both in her distinctive personal appearance, marked by close-cropped hair and emphatic earrings, and in the conceptually challenging artwork she favors. Paley first made a name for herself selling works by American artists such as Jenny Holzer and Sarah Charlesworth, along with the best of local British talent, often plucked straight from art school. These days, artists often make work for, rather than put pieces in, her gallery. This month, for example, Paley exhibits specially commissioned "lightworks" by Angela Bulloch, a young British artist, and the Californian Sarah Seager.

"It's a mistake when people approach the gallery as a shop—it isn't," insists Paley, a gently determined American, who has sold pieces to the Saatchis and to the Victoria and Albert Museum. "If anything, the gallery is a lab; it's a process. I see it as an experiment as much as anything else."

In December, Paley moved her "experiment" from a small artisan's cottage in London's predominantly working-class East End to a large loft on Dering Street, in the heart of central London. Charles Saatchi bought Helen Chadwick's large backlit photo piece of two human brains out of the expanded gallery's opening show. More recently, Saatchi has entered into competition with his ex-wife Doris as an energetic collector of Langlands and Bell, two young Paley protégés who make pristine objects based on architectural models. Paley persists in her belief that maintaining a good mix of unknown talent and established international names "is essential for the gallery's vitality."

The art world's colonization of the area around Dering Street has actually been going on for many years, with Paley's move only the latest example of a trend that began when Anthony d'Offay opened his first space there, in 1970. D'Offay, the acknowledged *capo* of the neighborhood, now has three spaces along the street. In the past year alone, his gallery has mounted major shows of Jasper Johns, Joseph Beuys, Gilbert and George, and Jannis Kounellis, among others. This month, he has devoted his three spaces to the work of the British Pop-art pioneer Richard Hamilton.

A year ago, the venerable dealer Annely Juda opened her skylit, top-floor gallery at 23 Dering Street with a retrospective of the constructivist Naum Gabo; and recently, the Anthony Reynolds Gallery, which has exhibited Nancy Spero, the Spanish sculptor Susana Solano, and the painter Thomas Lawson, also set up shop on the street. In this kind of company, Maureen Paley's gallery should be less an interim than a permanent fixture.

—Louisa Buck

Helen Chadwick, *Eroticism,* 1990; cibachrome transparency, glass, aluminum, and electrics; 48" x 30" x 8".

curs: "We export ninety-five percent of our things to America, Europe, and even Hong Kong." But London remains the symbolic heart of the Oriental-art market. "People still like to come to London," says Carter. "It remains part of the fashion in buying art."

A life-size statue of Guanyin, the Buddhist goddess of mercy, presides over Bluett's summer exhibition, spanning the spectrum of Chinese art. The sculpture, a rare and fragile stucco piece from the Song dynasty (960–1279), sits in the pose known as "royal ease," a gentle smile playing upon her lips. Other highlights of the show include a bronze wine vessel dating from the tenth century B.C. and a pair of enormous lacquer cupboards originally made for one of the palaces of the Wanli dynasty (1573–1619).

Noble prizes are also the focal point of Eskenazi's concurrent show, "Symbols of Status: Inlaid Bronze and Related Material from Pre-Tang China." The bronze pieces—which include chariot ornaments and ceremonial vessels decorated with materials such as gold, coral, silver, and jade—demonstrate the superb, intricate craftsmanship of imperial Chinese metalworkers. Most of the items date from the fourth century B.C. "The Art of the Warring States and Han Periods, 5th Century B.C.–2nd Century A.D.," the exhibition at Christian Deydier's Oriental Bronzes Ltd., features an extraordinary solid-bronze figure from the second century B.C. A winged deity with long hair and peculiarly exaggerated ears, it holds out candelabra and is, according to Deydier, one of a kind.

(Bluett & Sons Ltd., 60 Brook Street, W1; Christian Deydier's Oriental Bronzes Ltd., 96 Mount Street, W1; Eskenazi Ltd., 166 Piccadilly, W1; all in London.)

—Vanessa Clewes-Salmon

COURTESY ESKENAZI LTD., LONDON

Large garment hook inlaid in gold, silver, and turquoise, from the Eastern Zhou period (fourth–third century B.C.), from Eskenazi Ltd.

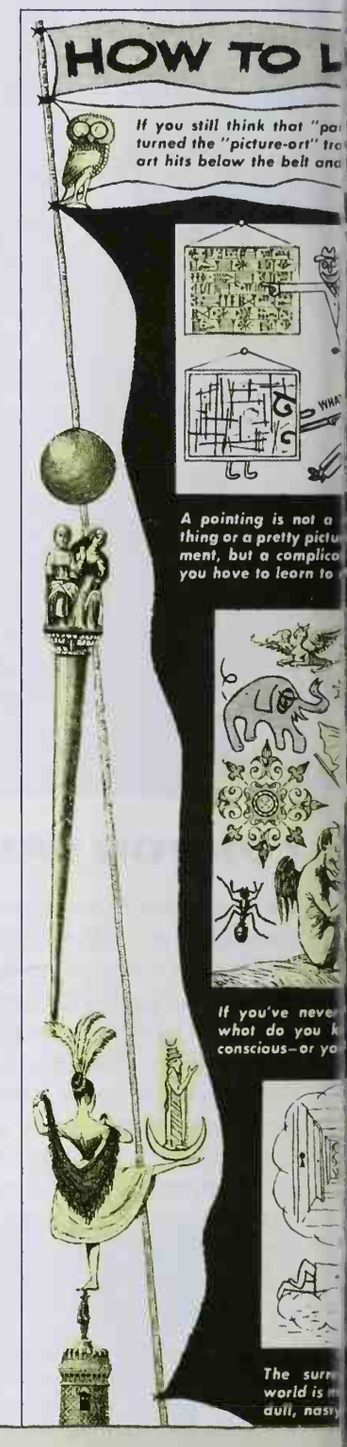
Museums

REINHARDT'S ART-TOONS

AD REINHARDT REPRESENTED THE hardest edge of the Abstract Expressionist movement. During his life, his obsessively flat, rigid paintings made him famous but did not sell. Although he was recognized as a standard-bearer of the new American painting, few canvases were bought before his untimely death, in 1967 at the age of fifty-four. But the posthumous acclaim accorded Reinhardt's paintings, featured in his current retrospective at New York's Museum of Modern Art (through September 2), has tended to obscure his achievements as a cartoonist and art-world gadfly.

Between the mid-1940s and the mid-1960s, Reinhardt created a series of collaged comic strips for *P. M.*, a newspaper of the time, and later for *Art News*. These satires, barbed with Reinhardt's wiry wit, poked fun at the art world's already burgeoning venality as well as lampooned the banal explanations of modernist art offered by academics. His thinly veiled attacks against fellow artists and critics made him many enemies (including his fellow Abstract Expressionist Barnett Newman, who sued him over one particularly cruel caricature), but the intractable Reinhardt was not fazed. *(A facsimile portfolio of Reinhardt's cartoons is available through Panicali Fine Art, 21 East Sixty-seventh Street, New York City.)*

—D. P.



OW (SURREALIST) ART
u weren't around a few years ago when surrealism ound. Digging deep into your mind's recesses, surrealist er things . . .
Third of a series explaining modern art by Ad Reinhardt.
IDIAN CHIEF
PROGRESSIVE
GOOD GUY
TRADE UNIONIST
PROFESSOR
how to look think about lem of what nt . . .
If you're someone who can't tell himself from a hole in the ground, here's what you look like (in perspective) from one . . .
but things some- at they seem but nething else . . .
If you don't look like Gorson or Goble, maybe you're something else to somebody . . .
HA HA WHAT DOES THIS REPRESENT?
WHAT DO YOU REPRESENT?
pictures hit the spot . . . is the thing for ickelnickel) . . .
Make no bones about it — anything that requires no effort from you is not worth anything . . .

REINHARDT: COURTESY PANICALI FINE ART, NEW YORK; TITIAN: GIFT OF J. CARTER BROWN IN HONOR OF THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

p:
rdt's collaged
ns, originally made for
ws magazine in the
s to 1960s,
s a slapstick sense
or hard to detect in his
abstract paintings.

GIVING AND GETTING

IF YOU ARE HAUNTED BY THOUGHTS OF YOUR EVER expanding tax burden and have also grown sick of that old Tiepolo drawing gathering dust on your wall, then 1991 may be the year for you. For the first time in five years, collectors have the opportunity to deduct the full appreciated value of works of art and other tangible assets donated to charitable organizations such as museums, libraries, and universities. The one-year trial "tax window" reverses the effects of the 1986 Tax Reform Act, which allowed the IRS to value donations of art only at their original cost.

In the five years since the passing of the Tax Reform Act, museums have seen donations plummet by as much as 47 percent, according to the American Association of Museums. Museums are hoping that a considerable rise in art donations for 1991 will encourage Congress to make the tax window permanent. "There has been a marked slowdown in the number of museum donations in the past few years," notes Gilbert Edelson, administrative vice-president of the Art Dealers Association of America, "but this year it's picking up again. We've already felt it in our appraisal services."

Titian, *Study of an Eagle*, ca. 1515; pen and brown ink on paper; 3 5/8" x 3 5/8"; donated to the National Gallery of Art by its director, J. Carter Brown.

Initially, the provision for the tax window, passed by Congress in November as part of the omnibus tax package for 1991, discouraged large-scale donations by omitting any mention of "carry over." Since, under current law, donors of tangible assets may not take a deduction exceeding 30 percent of adjusted gross income, the excess tax value of their donations would simply vanish. Luckily for museums and collectors alike, the IRS ruled in December that donors may "carry over" the excess value for up to five years.

Although the National Gallery of Art, in Washington, which celebrates its fiftieth anniversary this year, has been aggressively and successfully campaigning for donations for the past several years, the new tax window is proving to be a useful incentive. The director, J. Carter Brown, himself changed the status of a Titian drawing he had loaned to the museum into a gift as a result of the new provision. Ashton Hawkins, executive vice-president of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, says that the tax window is already having an effect. "We've had a very significant gift of Benin bronzes, ivories, and woodcarvings that was influenced by the tax law. The collection belonged to Mr. and Mrs. Klaus Perls; it includes 150 works and puts our holdings in this category in the same range as the British Museum's [in London] or Chicago's Field Museum's."

This year, you can follow the example of Mr. and Mrs. Perls by giving a gift that keeps on giving and get something back at the same time. —D. P.

Raphaël Delorme, *Untitled (Woman and Steamship)*, ca. 1928; oil on hardboard; 61 cm x 46 cm.

ALL THAT JAZZ AGE

THE 1920S WAS A PERIOD CHARACTERized by radically divergent styles, from the stark and geometric Bauhaus to the luxurious swirls of art deco. Now a major exhibition, "The 1920s: Age of the Metropolis," at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts from June 20 through November 10, presents an overview of this explosively creative decade when art movements and decorative trends came and went with astonishing rapidity. "We wanted to show the whole spectrum of the times, from the extreme avant-garde to the most conservative," says Pierre Théberge, the museum's director.

Alfred Courmes, *Portrait of Peggy Guggenheim*, 1926; oil on canvas; 100 cm x 65 cm.

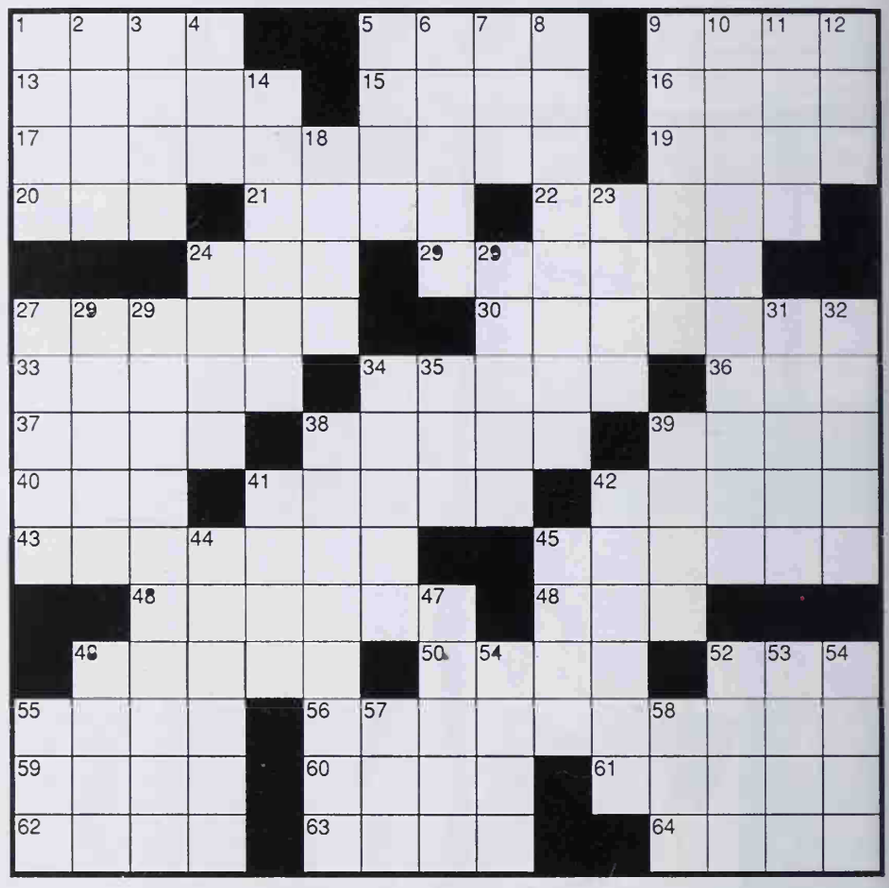
In a display of postmodernist irreverence, "The Age of the Metropolis" features the cutting-edge canvases of Kandinsky, Klee, and Schwitters, along with stylized portrayals of urban high life by once popular society painters such as Piero Marussig, Alfred Courmes, and Guy Pène du Bois. The show may even spark renewed interest in some artists who have been ignored since that time. Raphaël Delorme's painting of a naked woman walking toward a steamship, for example, evokes the period's fascination with machinery in a work that seems simultaneously innocent and ominous, despite its academic style. The massive exhibition has also gone beyond art and decorative arts to include dinosaur-like artifacts of the period, such as a Tiger Moth biplane and a Bugatti Royale automobile. With its eclectic approach, the Montreal Museum may have succeeded in capturing the vibrant spirit of an era. —D.P.

CONNOISSEUR'S

crossword

FILMS OF THE FORTIES

By Michael Shenk



ACROSS

1 *The* __ Years of *Our Lives* (1946 classic)
5 Tête-à-tête
9 They often clash
13 Alaskan Indian
15 Inauguration Day event
16 __ *but the Lonely Heart* (1944 Odets film)
17 1940 Ginger Rogers vehicle
19 Try to lose
20 End a fast
21 1948 Hitchcock film
22 Prepares to bear it
24 __ *favor* (Pedro's "Please")
25 Dorothy Lamour costume
27 Climb
30 Gas*light* Oscar winner
33 Sci-fi movie setting
34 Pass along
36 Singer Sumac
37 Chore
38 Comforter's kin
39 Had emulated Esther Williams
40 ". . . man __ mouse?"
41 Clothes-drying frame
42 Ilka of *Now Voyager*
43 1940 movie set at Manderley
45 Sustained, with "up"
46 *The* __ *Foxes* (1941 movie)
48 Collector's concern
49 Popular light-jazz singer
50 Incline
52 *Frieda* star Zetterling
55 *Buddenbrooks* writer
56 1949 Olivia de Havilland film
59 *Holiday Inn* co-writer Elmer
60 Mrs. Charles Chaplin
61 Italian director Luigi of 1946's *To Live in Peace*
62 __ *Spangled Rhythm* (1942 extravaganza)
63 Peruse
64 Like a snoop

DOWN

1 Make bread
2 *Gentleman's Agreement* director Kazan
3 Badger's burrow
4 14th-century B.C. king
5 *Sergeant York* star, familiarly
6 Gabby of *Tall in the Saddle*
7 U.S.-Eur. separator
8 With 38 Down, 1940 Chaplin satire
9 Finale
10 1944 Bing Crosby favorite
11 Wallet bills
12 Filming site
14 Power of 1947's *Nightmare Alley*
18 *How Green Was My Valley* director
23 Calhoun of 1947's *The R House*
24 *Duel in the Sun* star
26 More competent
27 Mary of *The Maltese Falc*
28 Thin
29 1942 classic set in Fren Morocco
31 Entertain
32 Christened
34 Like *The Farmer's Daugh*
35 __ *Knew Her Apples* (19 Ann Miller film)
38 See 8 Down
39 Cinematographer's take
41 Play beginning
42 Director of 29 Down
44 Disney chief Michael
45 Despicable
47 Verdugo of *The Moon and Sixpence*
49 Switch's partner
51 "If __ a hammer . . ."
52 Office note
53 Egyptian cobras
54 "Do as __!"
55 __ *Miniver*
57 Do garden work
58 Campaigned

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PHOTO SOURCES

Page 36: (top) Detail; medium, oil on canvas; size, 51¼" x 63". **Page 38:** (top) Date, 1960; © 1991 ARS, N.Y./SPADEM. **Page 40:** Size, 51" x 42½" (edition of 45). **Page 45:** *Décimacuarta Estación (Fourteenth Station): Triunfo del Fracaso*, from *The Stations of the Cross: To Latin America*; medium, acrylic on canvas with oil paint, wooden support, tin corona; size, 106" x 72" x 6" (support), 46" x 112" x 4" (corona). **Page 48:** Portrait, $375,000. **Page 49:** (center) Octant, $2,950; (right) Fabergé cuff links, work master August Hollming, St. Petersburg, ca. 1899–1908; $17,060. **Page 50:** (left) A rare French steel and brass dog's bed, ca. 1800; size, 17" x 20¼" x 14"; $15,750. **Page 51:** (top) Saw, $2,600; (bottom) Chippendale gilt wood Gainsborough armchairs, ca. mideighteenth century; provenance, Sir Everard Ratcliff, Bt., Rudding Park, Yorkshire; size, 98.5 cm (height), 76.5 cm. (width of seat), 74 cm. (depth); $288,668 the pair. **Page 55:** (clockwise from top) 1. Large cup (Mingei Kyoto ware), with colored stripes and gold lacquer repair, ca. 1900; 5. Nationwide country-ware bisque whistle with geisha design; Kitchizaki Sampai (Temple) gift; 8. Okame face, with Oni face on reverse, in Kyoto ware, with tassel, ca. 1940; 3. Kutnai cup with gold-leaf interior and fine gold-leaf pattern outside, ca. 1900; 2. Oribe ware cup with traditional iron-oxide waterwheel design, ca. 1920; 7. Mushroom (dried) with red lacquer and gold design of *Torii* (gate) at Wakura, ca. 1940; 4. *Shojyo* (red-haired sake imbiber) in wonderful costume, ca. 1950. **Page 56:** Two of a set of five Seto ware (fine porcelain) morning-glory cups, Seto seal, ca. 1930s. **Pages 88–95:** Location provided by Sotheby's International Realty. **Page 106:** (right) Recto: *Sheet of Studies, Including 3 Sketches of a Child Embracing a Lamb, and 3 Lines of Text, in Mirror Writing*; verso: *Sheet of Studies: A Child with a Lamb, A Head of an Old Man, Studies of Machinery, and Several Lines of Explanatory Text in Mirror Writing*. **Page 107:** © 1991 ARS, N.Y./ADAGP. **Page 109:** Stand height: 5⅝". **Pages 114–115:** Reinhardt cartoons photographed by Gary Buss. **May 1991 issue:** credit omission; **Pages 58, 59** (top), **60** (top, bottom middle), **61**, and **63** (top): Stylist, Nola Lopez.□

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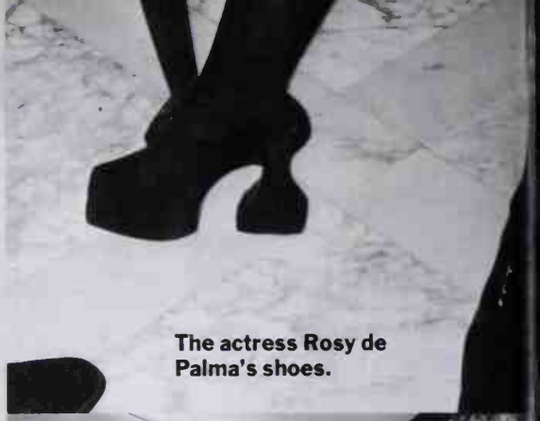
The Reina in Spain

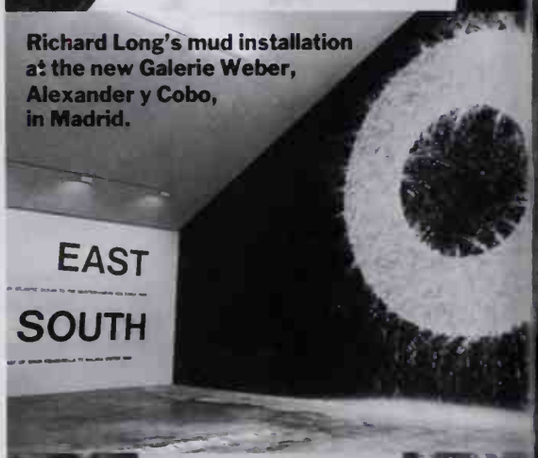
A flood of contemporary art inundated the world's top art dealers and collectors at Madrid's annual contemporary-art fair, but the Reina Sofía art center made the biggest splash.

Photographs by Christopher Makos

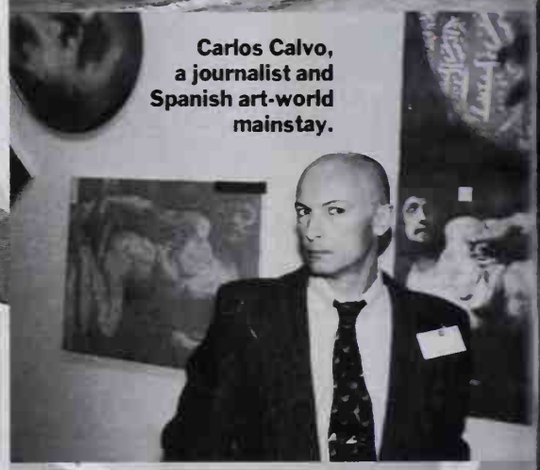
Pop-ups: *Left to right,* the Düsseldorf dealer Hans Mayer, Zurich gallery owner Bruno Bischofberger, and New York–based Tony Shafrazi jumping for joy at ARCO.



The actress Rosy de Palma's shoes.



Richard Long's mud installation at the new Galerie Weber, Alexander y Cobo, in Madrid.



Carlos Calvo, a journalist and Spanish art-world mainstay.

An installation by the Portuguese artist Leonel Moura at ARCO.

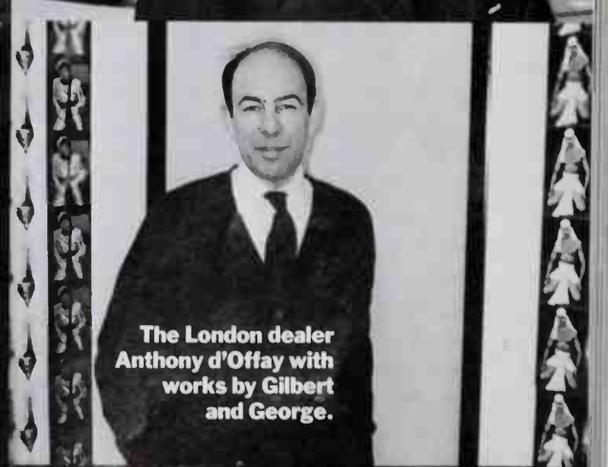
The Reina Sofia ar new glass-towe

Neptune Fountain, de Madrid's e Hotel.

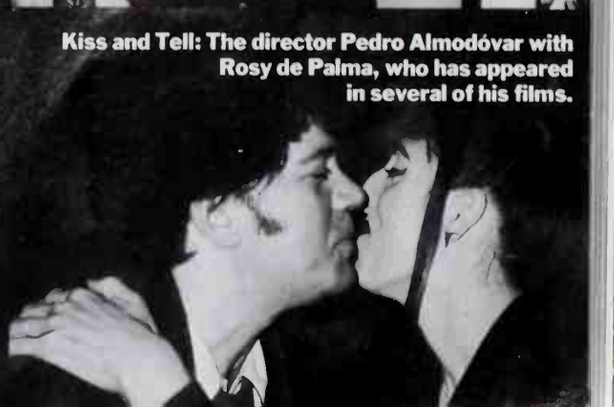
The fashion designer Agatha Ruiz de la Prada, *left*, with the gallery owner Marta Moriarty.

Juana de Aizpuru, former director of ARCO, with her nephew Christian Dominguez.

Guillermo de Osma, collector of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century art.



The London dealer Anthony d'Offay with works by Gilbert and George.



Kiss and Tell: The director Pedro Almodóvar with Rosy de Palma, who has appeared in several of his films.

THIS YEAR MARKED THE TENTH anniversary of Spain's contemporary-art fair (ARCO), which in its short lifetime has become a focal point for the international art community. Each February, a swarm of the world's top dealers, collectors, and aesthetes pours into Madrid for the week-long event, with this year's presiding luminaries including Anthony d'Offay, Bruno Bischofberger, Brooke Alexander, and Spanish art-world stalwarts such as Carlos Calvo, Giullermo de Osma, and Marta Moriarty. The war and the recession may have kept sales down from last year, but spirits remained high, and the Spanish art world seemed to be moving toward another renaissance.

The talk at this year's fair revolved around the Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid's showcase for contemporary art, housed in an elegant eighteenth-century hospital designed by Sabatini. The Reina Sofía has recently changed directors, and its new leader, María Corral, has defied her predecessors by indefinitely postponing an exhibition of the museum's permanent holdings. "I am not interested in a collection of token examples," she told reporters. Future shows at the Reina Sofía will include "Torres-García and the Southern School" (June 11–July 29) and, in the fall, retrospectives devoted to Nicolas de Staël, André Breton, and Robert Therrien. —Vicente Carretón

something to declare

RANTINGS AND RAVINGS FROM OUR JET-SETTING PLUTOCRAT

June is the favorite month of British royalty. It is the month they attend the Derby, the Royal Ascot, and Wimbledon. During June the day is long, the night is young, and young royals, in particular, can sally forth into Knightsbridge, Mayfair, and South Kensington in search of fashion, food, and frocks. All under the guise of duty, of course.

Especially this year. That awful spot of bother down in the gulf made it touch and go for a while—whether there would be any partying in June, that is. It all began with the stuffy *Sunday Times* condemning royal behavior while the country was at war. In essence the editorial said that although the nation was about to embark on the biggest land battle since the Second World War, a battle in which many of Britain's finest were expected to risk their lives, the royals and their entourage carried on as if nothing were happening, parading a mixture of upper-class decadence and insensitivity that disgusted the public and demeaned the monarchy.

The queen was not criticized but was said to be angered—at the editorial, not at her do-little clan. Despite the fact she was not amused, she nevertheless put everyone to work. A flurry of visits to service personnel and their families ensued, one that came to a halt only when Saddam threw in the towel. The flurry, however, proved one thing: that the *ST* editorial was right on the royal button.

Needless to say, there was a ground swell of unease toward the royals already. Just prior to the gulf land war, it was revealed that the queen, who pays no taxes but receives huge amounts from the tax-paying public in order to keep up her palaces, castles, planes, and trains, not to mention the royal yacht, raked in £1.8 million per day in interest payments on her wealth. This is around three and a quarter million dollars daily for the most sour-looking monarch in the world. (Her hats alone have been known to make babies cry.) As if this were not enough, pictures of her daughter-in-law the notorious Fergie have regularly appeared in *Hello* magazine. This so enraged Keith Waterhouse, an English playwright and author, that he described the duchess of York as "the duchess of Yuk" and encouraged the Yuks to open a nightclub called Fergie's.

Once upon a time such remarks would have led a thousand horse whips to leap from their scabbards, but these are the 1990s—not the 1790s, as the royals seem to think. The royals, especially the younger ones, are greedy, idle, and lavish pensioners in late adolescence. So, is it about time the queen's conscience was activated? The answer can only be a resounding yes.

For starters: with private assets of six billion, six hundred million pounds, or twelve billion dollars, the queen should pay income tax and stop receiving as much money as she does from the tax-paying public. This is a sine qua non. Second, the royal family should do something about its apparent lack of concern over things such as the war. Finally, they should stop looking so glum and ill-tempered and act like the extremely well paid civil servants that they are in reality.

Mind you, they do have some good excuses for their behavior. Most of them are surrounded by deferential royal advisers, flunkies, and other courtiers of the most obsequious nature, the kind of people who would no more call a spade a spade than, say, Princess Michael of Kent would refuse a free trip to America, all expenses paid. The queen herself listens to her husband, a man whose blinkered arrogance, self-satisfaction, and irritability grow by leaps and bounds every year. (Philip of Edinburgh has never held a job in his life, yet his favorite exhortation to people is "Pull your finger out and do some work.")

Are there any good royals? Yes: Di, for one. (Now, *there* would be a queen who would revive the reputations of all involved.) She's acted impeccably. But then, she's on record as saying she's as thick as a plank. To be popular and act responsibly, a royal needs lots of character rather than brains. There are also the queen's cousins: the duke and duchess of Kent, Princess Alexandra, and the Gloucesters are all dignified, pleasant, and hardworking. Their conduct has always been dedicated and inspiring, but their behavior is not enough to make up for the rest of the firm. Fergie alone has managed to start a movement toward a republic, or so it seems when she is photographed ad nauseam tripping the light fantastic with the likes of Steve Wyatt.

The worthless sons of George III—yes, the very man Americans fought a war to be free of—gave England her best chance to become a republic. They were truly despised as spendthrifts, drunks, and do-nothings. The present lot is not hated, but the signs are there. Fergie and her appendage should take note. We are now approaching a new era, a century of a federal Europe when the British royals could become totally irrelevant. I, for one, a republican as well as a Republican, sincerely hope so, but for the time being I'm still in the minority. □

BY TAKI

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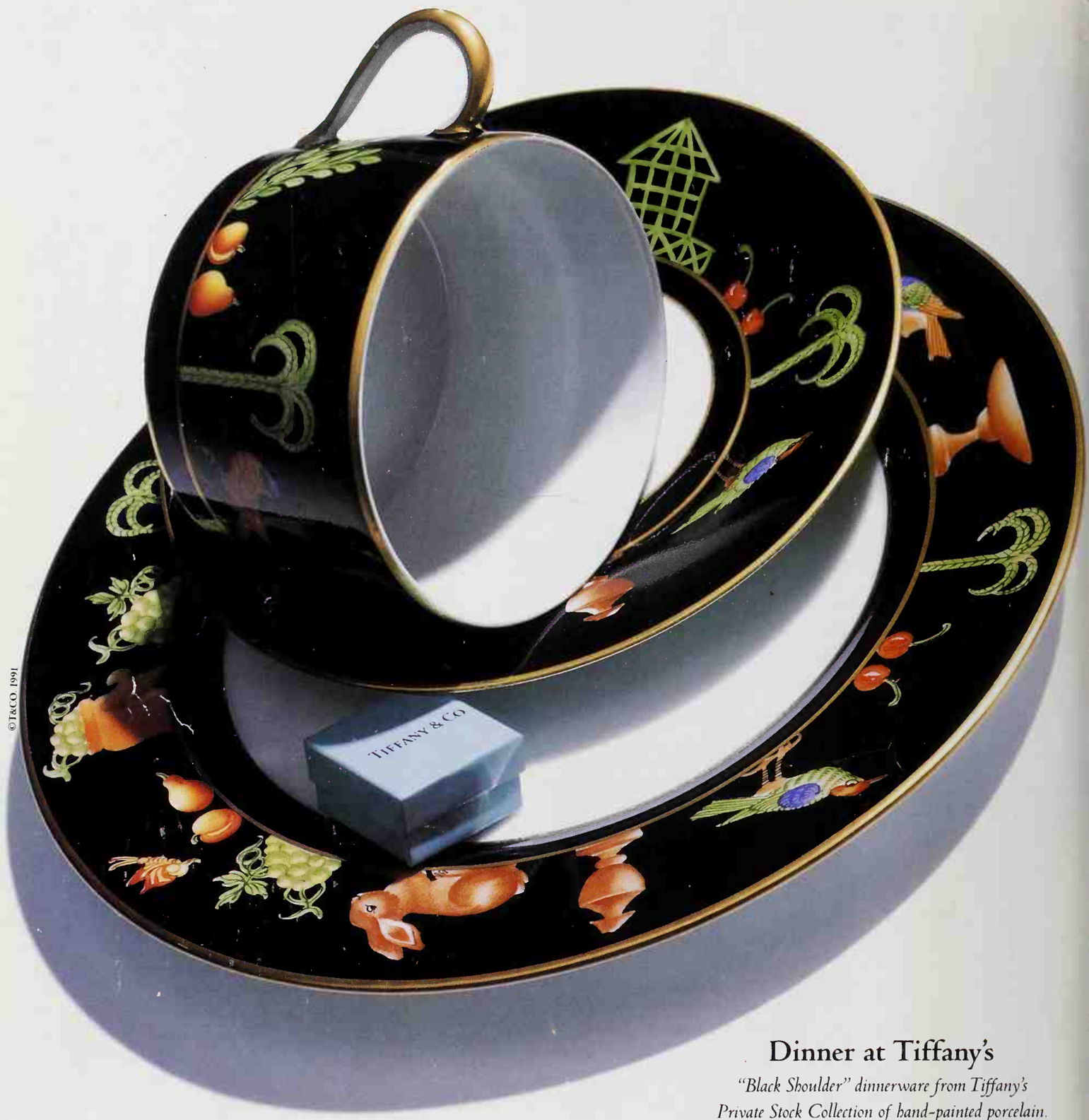

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CONNOISSEUR

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Kevin Kline photographed exclusively for *Connoisseur* by Walter Chin. Styled by Patty Wilson. Grooming by Jetty Stutzman for Cloutier. Mr. Kline's jacket, Giorgio Armani; T-shirt, Comme des Garçons Homme Plus by Rei Kawakubo; scarf, J. Magnin. "Skull chair," artist unknown; inscription reads: "Ivanovic Cheshchevi to Nickolay Ivanovic Kolomin, 1838."

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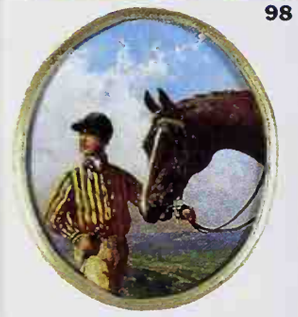

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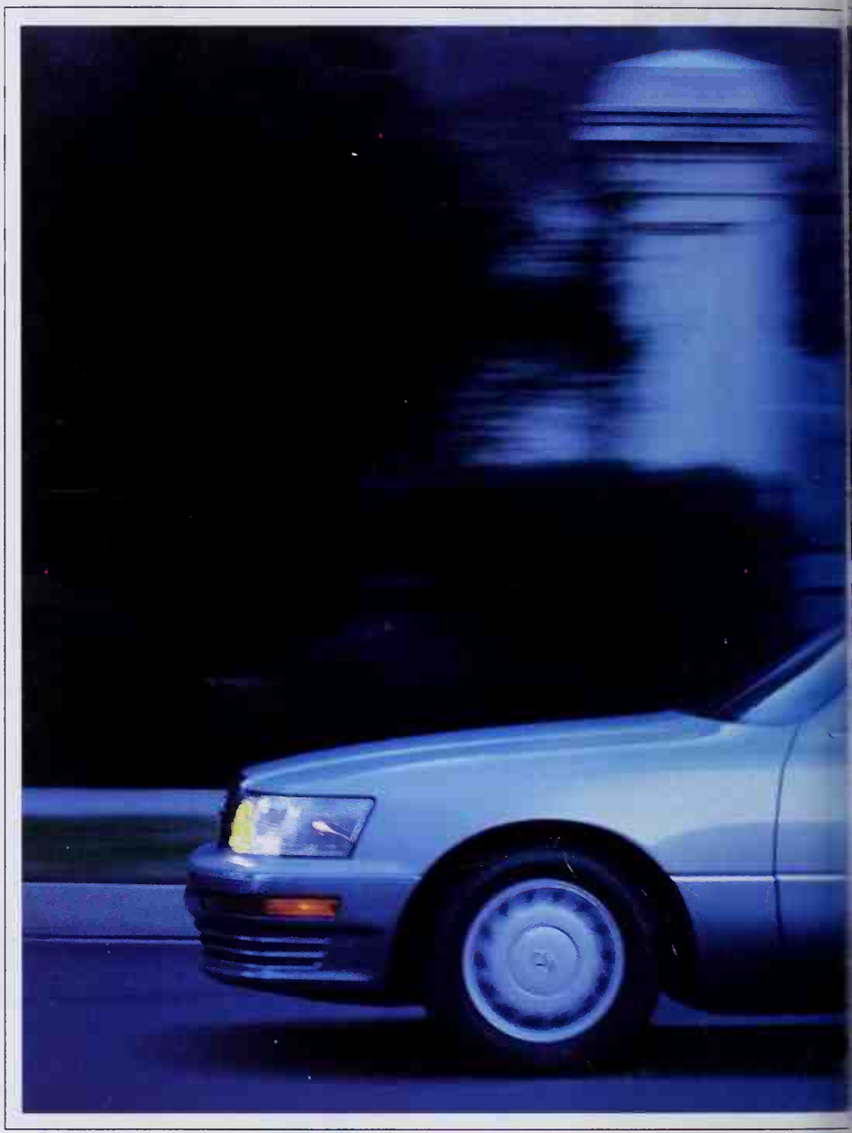

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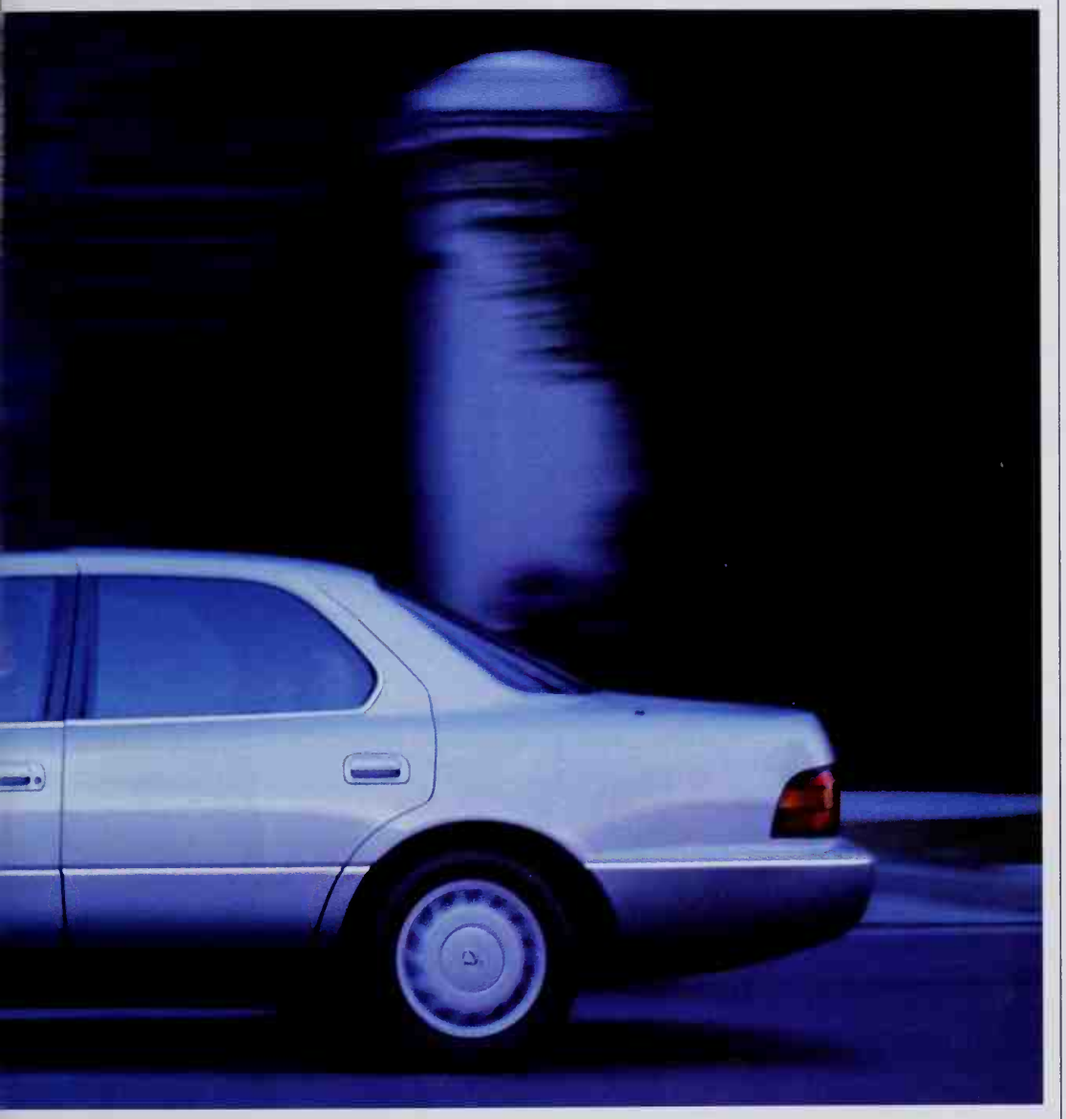

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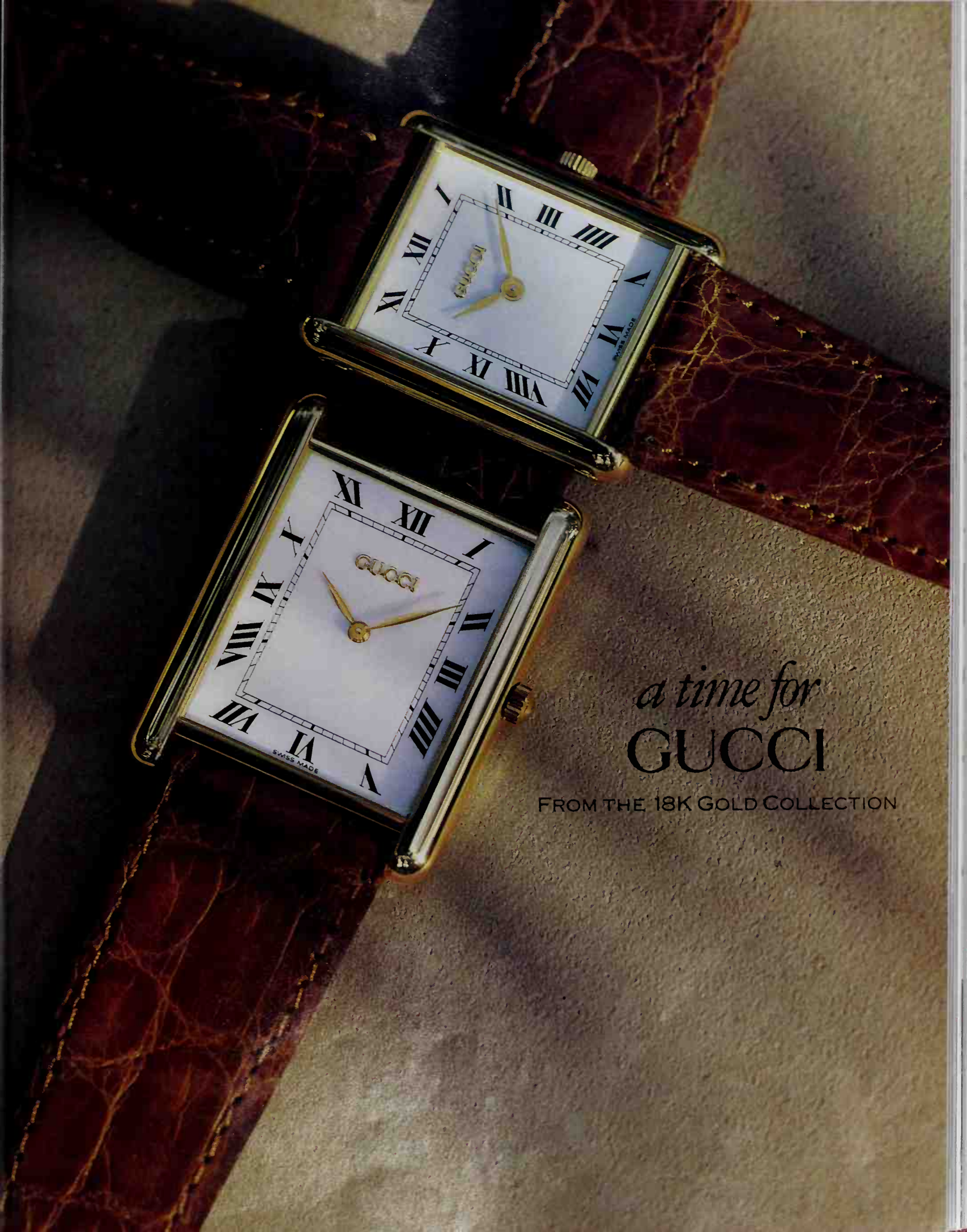
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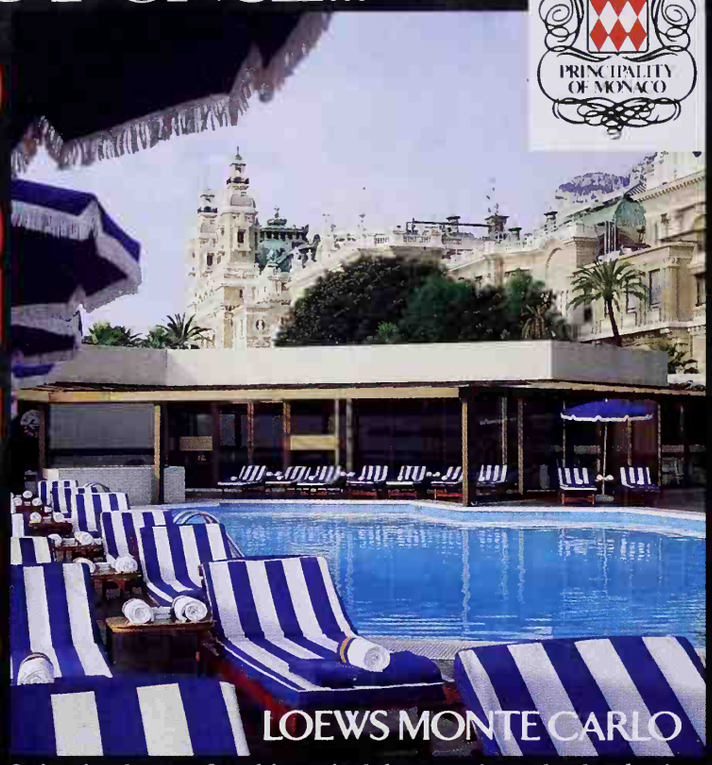

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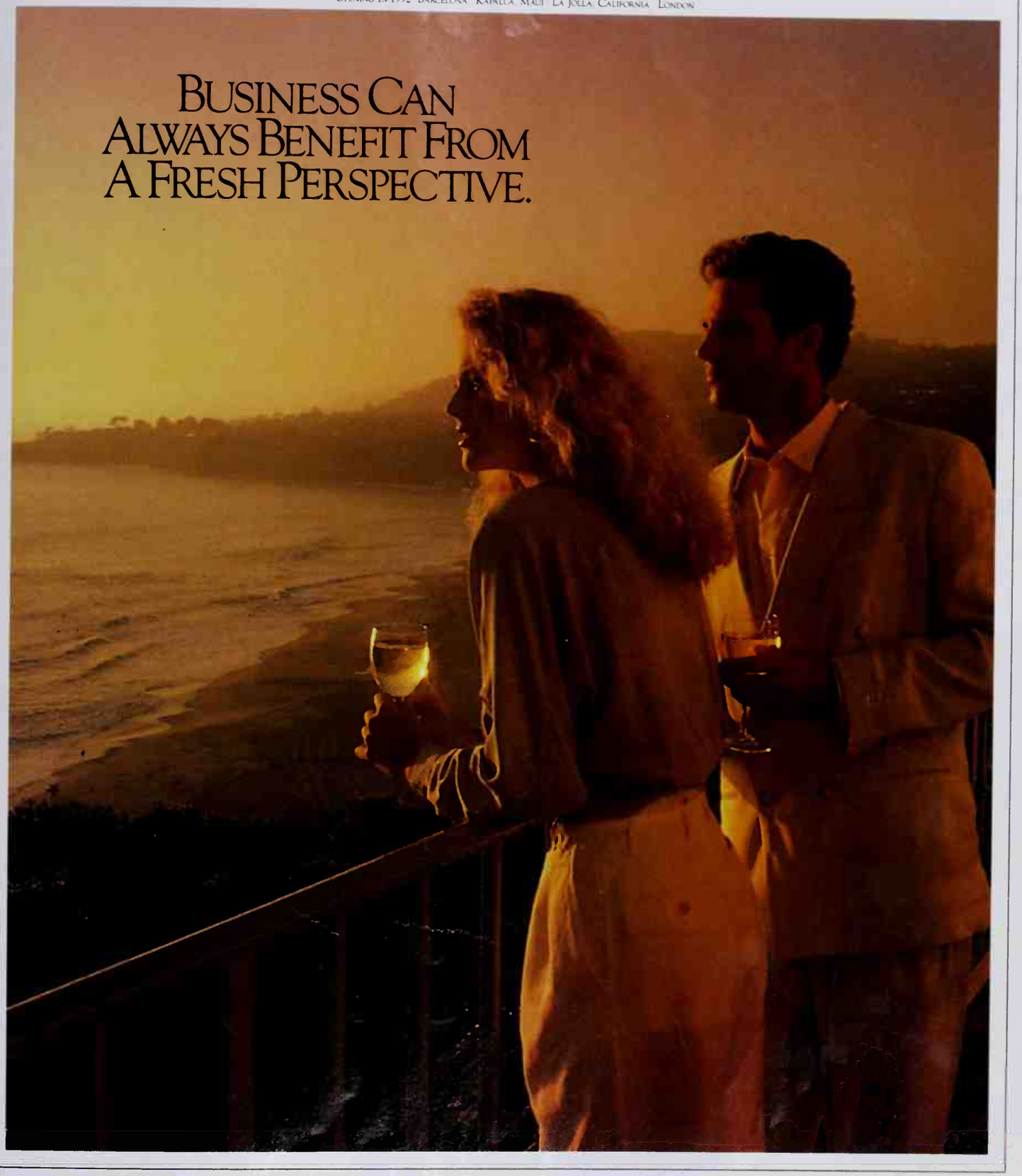

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EDITOR'S LETTER

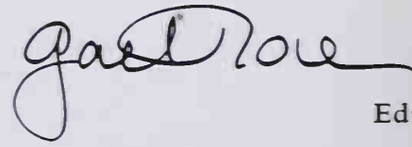
IF IT'S TRUE THAT TALENT IS THE TRUEST FORM OF glamour, then few are as glamorous as Kevin Kline. To Kline, the ultimate truth or dare is the work that you see on the stage and screen—the creative verve of his acting reminding us how thrilling this much-discredited art form can be. In an age when stars of minimal talent get maximum media saturation, Kline keeps delivering one virtuoso performance after another, going out on a limb in musicals (*On the Twentieth Century*, *The Pirates of Penzance*), Shakespeare (*Richard III* and *Hamlet*), and commercial films (his Academy Award–winning role in *A Fish Called Wanda* and the recently released *Soapdish*). With all his daring, this is still someone clearly in control of even his most adventuresome interpretations, yet at the same time unwilling to be distracted by the hype. With Kline not exactly a steady subject for the tabloids, it's a pleasure to have him so concisely presented by Joe Morgenstern in this month's cover story, "Kevin's Choice."

Morgenstern gives us as illuminating a celebrity profile as you will ever read, of an individual with a decided lack of neuroses about his art, life, and career—a refreshing change from the Sturm und Drang of performers of lesser ability.

TEA IN THE SALONE DEL VAN DYCK, ANYONE? AN exclusive tour of Genoa's Palazzo Durazzo Pallavicini—which contains one of the world's finest private collections of Van Dycks, Rubenses, and Renis, among others—is this issue's most wondrous visual feast, and one never before presented to the public. "Palace Coup" is also an entertaining lesson in the beneficent power—and enormous responsibility—of owning and maintaining great art, in this case hundreds of pieces of it.

As told by Gabriella De Ferrari, it also proved to be a fascinating story of how generations of the palazzo's guardians managed to keep the house and its contents together for more than three centuries. The woman most responsible for the palazzo's continuing preservation was the late marchesa Carlotta Cattaneo Adorno, whose efforts were rewarded with a visit in 1980 by Queen Elizabeth II, a woman who knows a good deal herself about priceless art collections. The marchesa's obsession with maintaining the aesthetic integrity of her home and its 200 important paintings was a triumph over the natural and sometimes unnatural forces that have split up so many splendid family legacies.

Massimo Listri's exquisite photographs of the palace round out this eye-opening experience—only one of many we hope will grab you in this month's issue of the magazine.



Gael Love
Editor-in-Chief

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CONTRIBUTORS

JERRY PATTERSON is the author of eleven books, including his latest, *The Vanderbilts* (Harry Abrams), published last year. In this month's Valuations column, he examines one of the art market's most stable investments: sporting paintings. Page 98.

GUZMAN, the New York–based photographers Constance Hansen and Russell Peacock, shot this month's menswear story "Mood Indigo." Page 74.

RUDY MAXA, senior writer at the *Washingtonian* and former reporter for the *Washington Post*, tracks down the world's largest private arms merchant, Sam Cummings. Page 60.

ANDREW SOLOMON, a contributing editor for *HG* and *Harpers and Queen*, adapted his recently released book, *The Irony Tower* (Knopf), for our article on the "discovery" of contemporary Soviet art by the West. Page 54.

JOE MORGENSTERN, formerly the movie critic at *Newsweek*, has written for the *New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and *Playboy*. For our cover story, he interviews Kevin Kline, star of *Soapdish*. Page 38.

GABRIELLA DE FERRARI, a novelist, free-lance journalist, and a former curatorial director of the Fogg Museum in Boston, traveled to Genoa, Italy, for an exclusive tour of the mysterious Palazzo Durazzo Pallavicini. Page 44.

CHRISTOPHER SILVESTER, a senior reporter for the British magazine *Private Eye*, follows actress Glenda Jackson's Labour party candidacy for Parliament. Page 16.

RICHARD JOHNSON, now a columnist at the *Daily News*, has covered New York's social circuit for the *New York Post* and the *New York Observer*. In his monthly column, The Ear, he reports the lowdown on the uptown and downtown art scenes . . . and more. Page 29.

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LETTERS

SMALL MINDS

Your right hand seems not to know what your left hand is doing. I quote from the article "Movies to Go" in the April 1990 issue: "*All Night Long* (1981). This is one of the worst films of all time." Then from the April 1991 issue, the article "The Best Movies on Video": "*All Night Long*. A lovely, delicate, romantic comedy . . . with a lyrical touch that is virtually unknown in today's Hollywood film." But then, as they say, consistency is the mark of small minds.

James B. Serrin
Minneapolis, Minnesota

CHAMPIONS OF FREEDOM?

A connoisseur's choice should be based on thorough knowledge and sound judgment. These were missing when you chose *Guilty by Suspicion* as the movie of the month [April]. Hollywood movies, particularly political ones, are biased. Film director Edward Dmytryk, as *Guilty by Suspicion* implies, did not "break under questioning" by the House Un-American Activities Committee but went to prison along with the other nine Hollywood Stalinists. After serving his prison term, Dmytryk, who had come to realize that communism is evil, testified *voluntarily* in front of the HUAC committee.

While millions of East Europeans are throwing off the Stalinist yoke, *Guilty by Suspicion* eulogizes Stalinists—the "Hollywood Ten"—as, of all things, champions of freedom!

Herbert Loebel
Sherman, Connecticut

AHEAD OF ITS TIME

In his article on the recent restoration of Stanley Kubrick's *Spartacus* [April], "Violence and Sex," Gilbert Adair blames most of the film's original excisions on Hollywood's aversion to violence and sex. Maybe. But when he cites a particular corpse-laden battle scene as yet another victim of the censors, Adair may have missed a more salient reason for its omission. If the still photo of the battle scene is a reliable index of what appears on-screen, it was ahead of its time in more ways than one. It depicts not only a hillside strewn with bloody bodies but also a skyline crisscrossed by at least two very distinct jet trails.

Jeffrey Burbank
Los Angeles, California

A WOMAN'S CHOICE

It is questionable how necessary it was for Vicki Goldberg to share with us Sebastião Salgado's domestic arrangements ["Militant with a Camera," March]. However, the condescending remark that Lélia Wanick Salgado, "trained as an urban planner, chose to care for her family" needs addressing. Women who work at their careers also choose to care for their families. Some people might interpret Mrs. Salgado's choice as selfish on the grounds that it is a misuse of society's resources to allow oneself to be educated for a profession one does not follow.

R. G. Winters
Albany, New York

OF ALL PLACES

Your article about the Catherine the Great exhibition in Memphis, Tennessee ["The Empress Goes West," April], was lovely except for the snobbish subtitle, "Tennessee, of all Places." Why shouldn't Catherine come to Memphis? Can't culture be found in any city, town, or village, in this country, or any other, if you choose to look closely enough?

Carol A. Grigg
Germantown, Tennessee

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Due to an editing error in Joan Acocella's "Beauty Wakes Up Again" (May 1991), the critic André Levinson was mistakenly placed in the audience of the Royal Ballet's* Sleeping Beauty *in the 1950s; in fact, it was in the 1890s, at the original Russian Imperial Ballet production, that Levinson was converted to ballet.*

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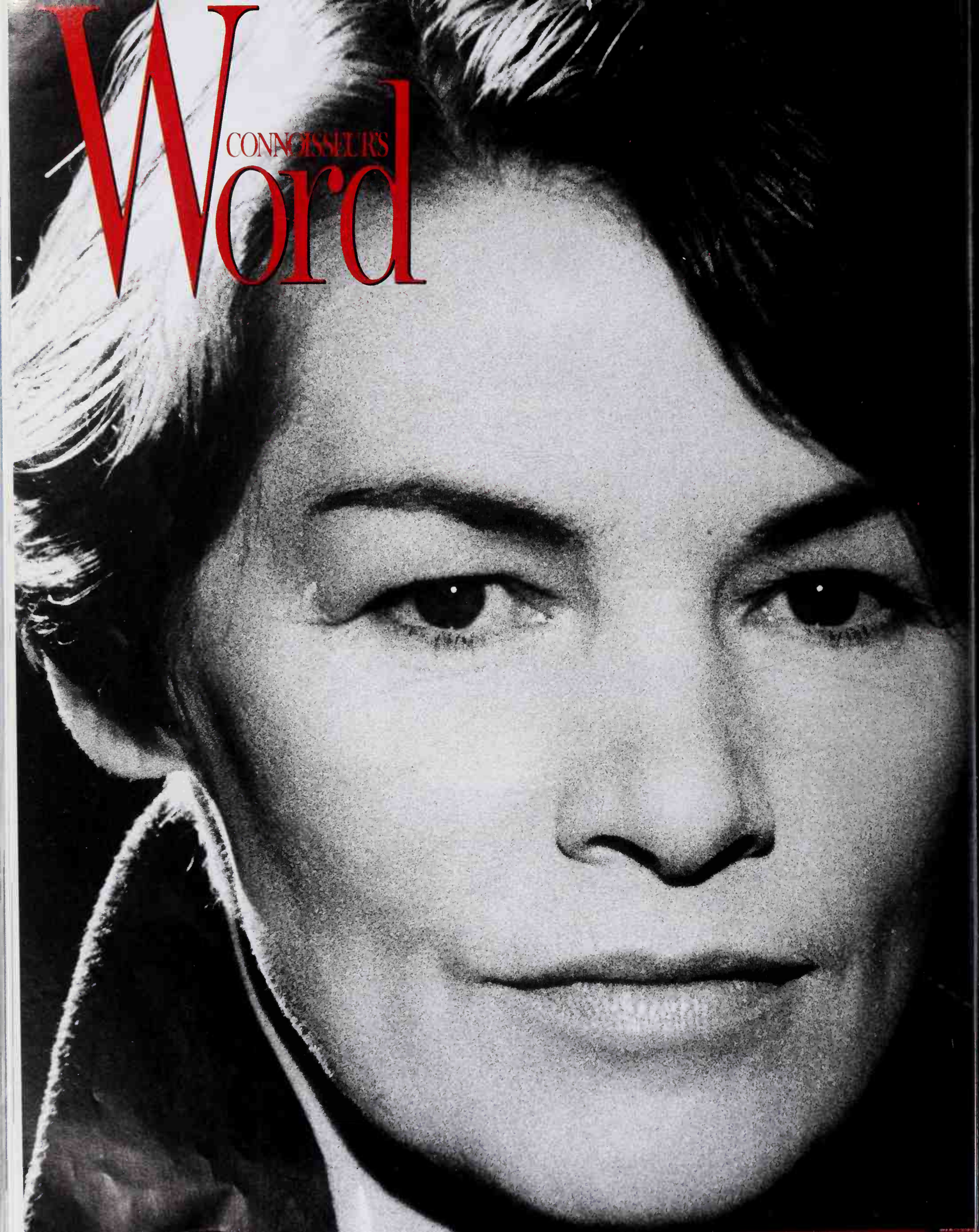
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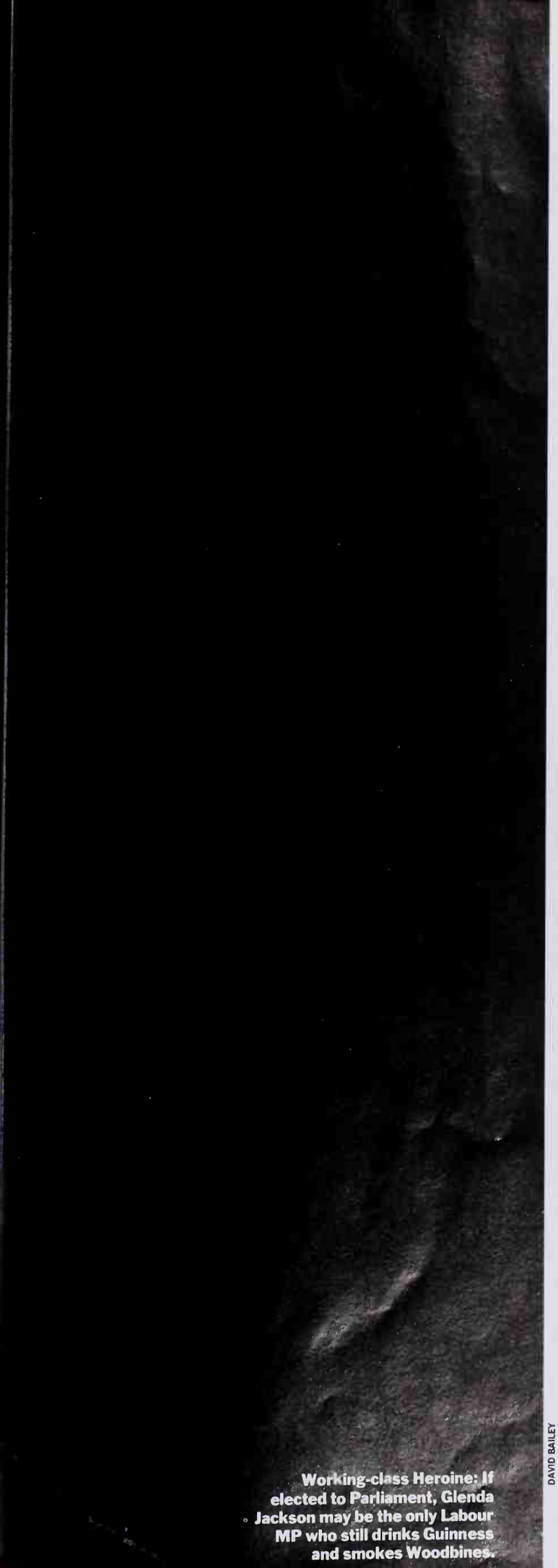


DAVID BAILEY

Working-class Heroine: If elected to Parliament, Glenda Jackson may be the only Labour MP who still drinks Guinness and smokes Woodbines.

LABOUR PAINS

Glenda Jackson is giving birth to a new career in politics, preparing to give up all those nasty habits—Hollywood, her beloved regional theater—in a quest to become the House of Commons' newest leading lady.

by Christopher Silvester

Perhaps it's the gruel and kidney pies Britain's actors, writers, and directors feed on during their wonder years. While liberal American theatrical artists give an occasional antiwar squeak (Margot Kidder) or lobby against the use of Alar on apples (Meryl Streep), their Brit colleagues are far more avid, either forming Dostoyevskian-sounding left-wing societies (Harold Pinter's 20th of June Group) or coming out before being knighted (Ian McKellen) or campaigning for the PLO. Indeed, England's theatrical left is so vital and vocal a force that one of its own has become the Labour party candidate for a seat in Parliament.

For over twenty years, the fiery, resolutely intelligent Glenda Jackson, now fifty-five years old, has been threatening to give up acting and take up a more spiritually rewarding

career. In 1970 she talked vaguely about doing "something socially useful" and adopting "lots of children"; in 1971 she launched National Shelter Week, a fund-raiser for the homeless, by handing in a contribution envelope to No. 10 Downing Street; in 1972 it was "helping the homeless and the handicapped." For the following fifteen years, she toyed with various other options, among them joining Voluntary Service Overseas, the Brit version of the Peace Corps, and devoting herself to teaching English in China. "The whole idea," she said, "is to try something new. I would forget acting altogether. After three years, acting would probably forget me." Seeing a possible bonanza, various Labour party members—for whom Jackson had often campaigned—asked her at various times during the eighties to run for Parliament, but she declined. "I'd like to have a crack at it," she explained at the time. "But I'm probably too old and too undereducated. I told them if they seriously wanted to get the Tories out, they should not ask me."

Action Jackson: The actress and nascent politician with Labour party leader Neil Kinnock in 1985.

Jackson's very dissatisfaction with her field—not to mention her vagueness of purpose and lack of self-confidence—seemed rather odd for the dazzling Liverpool-born actress, who managed to embody the new feminist spirit in films such as *Women in Love* (1969), *Sunday Bloody Sunday* (1971), and *A Touch of Class* (1973; for the first and last of which she won Academy Awards) without ever seeming downscale, invulnerable, or dogmatic. And it was a little disheartening to her admirers: if acting was no longer a meaningful enterprise to Jackson—one of the few who could make their art so fiercely, excitingly expressive—who in the world *could* it be meaningful to?

The conclusion to Jackson's two-decade-long dithering came in 1990 when—with Maggie and the Conservatives on the seeming brink—she allowed her name to be put forward for the parliamentary candidacy of the Hampstead and Highgate districts of London. A confidant and friend of Neil Kinnock's, leader of the Labour party, she was the clear favorite among the four candidates from the area—all women—obtaining nearly 60 percent of the polling in her district. (This did not happen, however, without stepping on some toes; during the election, Steve Taylor, the chairman of the district's Labour party organization, complained that she was using her celebrity status to steal a march on her rivals by giving interviews to the press: "I am wary of a campaign that is celebrity rather than politically led. We've no idea what her political views are." Jackson replied by telling him to "pull the other one.") If she can overturn a slim Conservative majority at the next general election, predicted to take place sometime within the following year (a not unlikely prospect unless there is a major—or rather a John Major—resurgence), she will become a member of parliament. Indeed, Gerald Isaaman, the editor of the local *Hampstead & Highgate Express,* reckons that Jackson "will walk away with it."

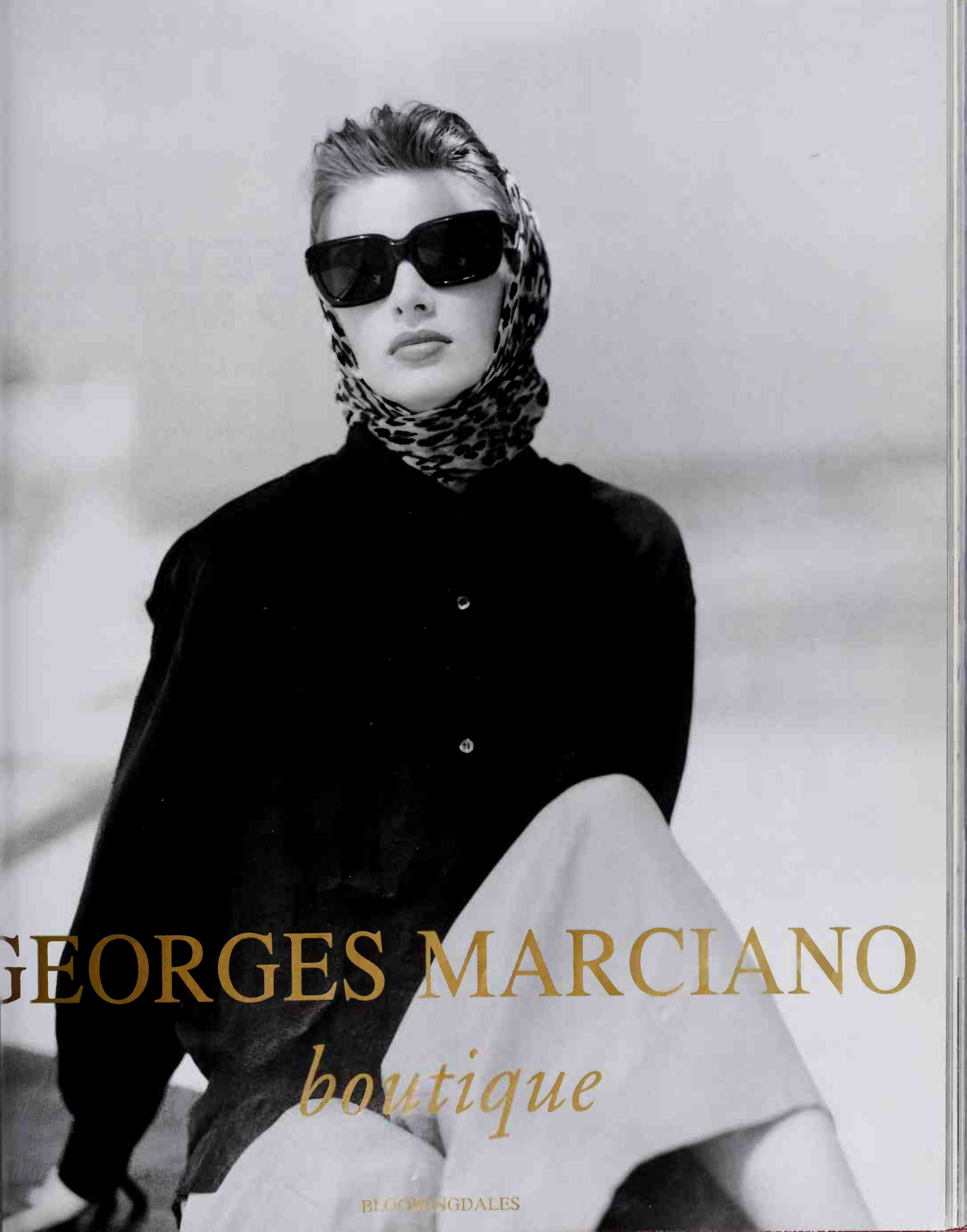
GLENDA MAY JACKSON WAS BORN ON May 9, 1936, in Birkenhead, just across the Mersey estuary from Liverpool, at her grandmother's house, where her parents also lived. She is the oldest of four daughters born to Micky Jackson, a bricklayer, and his wife, Joan, who later worked as a housecleaner and a barmaid. There were gaps of between five and seven years between the births of each daughter, so Glenda was almost seventeen when her youngest sister came along. The family was poor, though Micky always worked unless the weather was bad and Joan would earn about $1.50 for a morning's work of scrubbing floors and dusting.

Jackson believes it was her own role as the eldest of four sisters that gave her the authority that has been the hallmark of her drama career: "I blame my bossiness on the fact that I was the oldest child and told to take control of my sisters. It was a matriarchal society: the men were at war and the women ran the house. I can remember my father sitting in front of the fire telling my mother, 'The fire's gone out. Come and light it.' " Jackson may have acquired confidence at home, but she remembers herself as "a really plain, most hideous child, enormously fat and very spotty."

At school, Glenda failed to measure up to academic expectations. She and a friend would do their best to avoid the lessons they didn't like by taking turns locking each other in a school closet. She was impressed by the performance of the legendary actor-manager Donald Wolfit as Shylock, which she saw on a school trip to the theater in Liverpool. Although she never acted at school, her passionate speaking style in class debates earned her the nickname Reverend Jackson. But Glenda left school at sixteen. "I would have gone to university," she has said, "but I went through that female trough at thirteen to fifteen where learning ceases to have any importance. There were so many hor-

(Continued on page 82)

A Touch of Class: Jackson as Queen Elizabeth I, *left*, with Vanessa Redgrave as the insurrectionary Mary, in the 1971 film *Mary Queen of Scots*. Although both are leftists, the more moderate Jackson has met with far more political success than Redgrave.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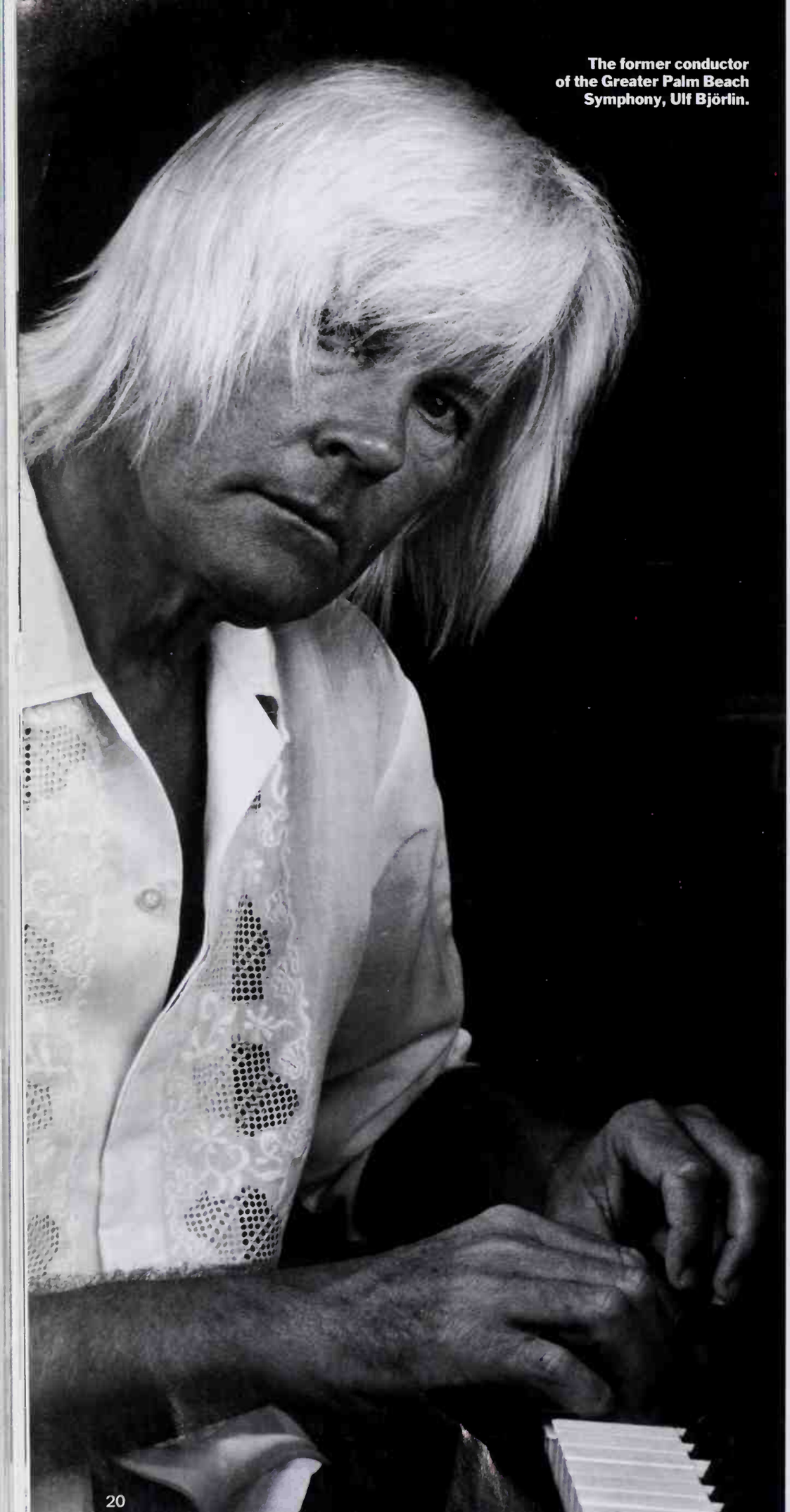


The former conductor of the Greater Palm Beach Symphony, Ulf Björlin.

FEUD IN B MINOR

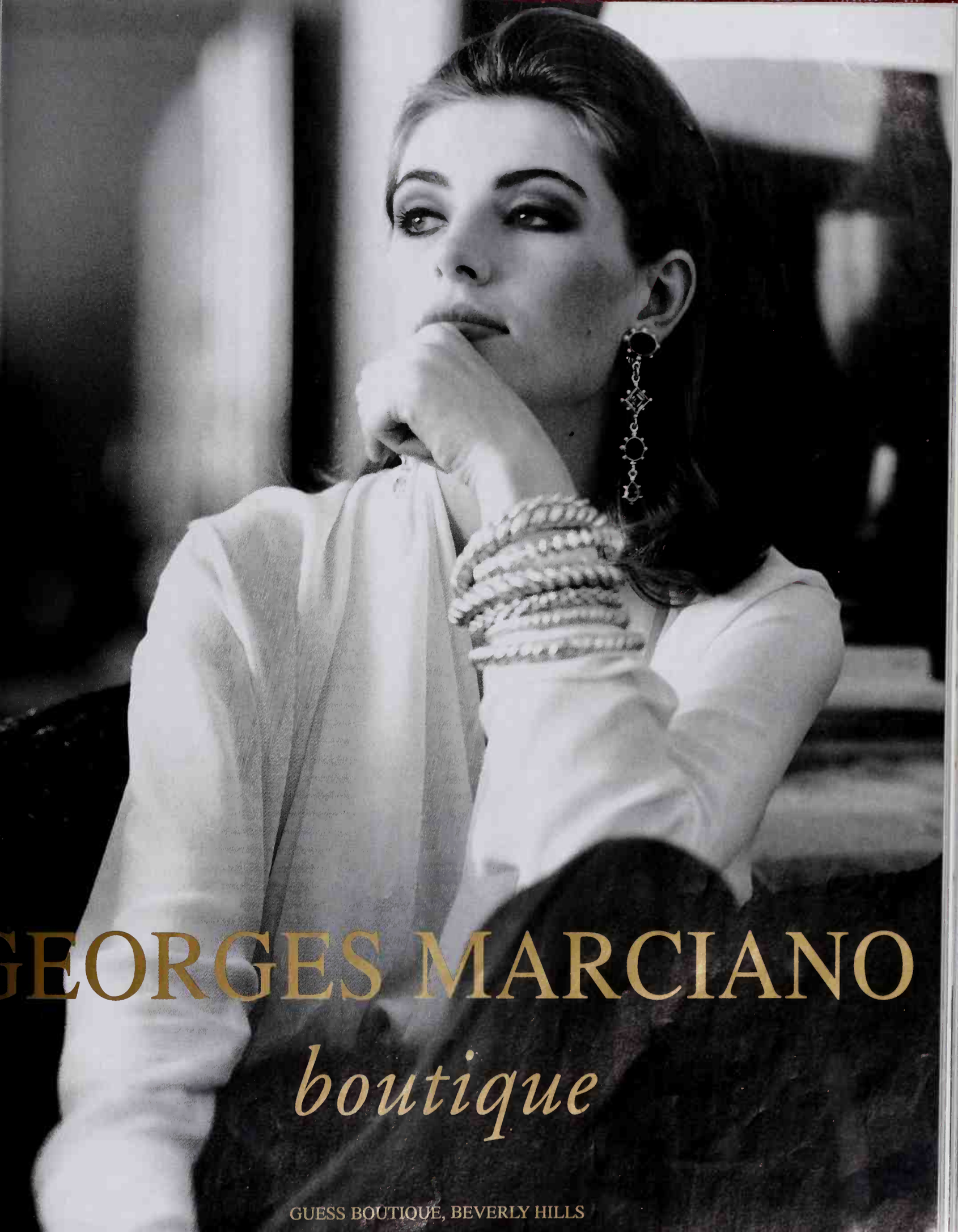
Mozart had Salieri. Haydn, the Esterházys. Ulf Björlin, the conductor of the Greater Palm Beach Symphony, had Ethel Stone. Björlin's summary dismissal by the symphony's septuagenarian czarina had the air of an autocrat's execution and led to an uproar that has kept Palm Beachers humming for months.

by Linda Marx

It was not your typical Palm Beach event.

On the evening of April 25, 1990, some 700 Palm Beach residents paid $125 each to attend a concert at the Royal Poinciana Playhouse, and—to the surprise of just about everyone—no one walked out. At even the most important cultural events, an alarming proportion of Palm Beach audiences have a blithe habit of getting up and leaving their seats, either to get to the far more important opening-night party or to hide out in the bathrooms and chat until the end of the performance. But at the premiere of Ulf Björlin's *Portrait of Raoul Wallenberg*, a locally produced choral and symphonic work, everyone sat still until the very last note.

Björlin, the Swedish-born conductor of the Greater Palm Beach Symphony, had composed the forty-five-minute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musical tribute to his countryman with the aid of New York playwright Herb Schapiro. Schapiro supplied the text, adapting a play he had written about the Swedish diplomat who risked his sheltered, upper-class existence to save more than 200,000 Hungarian Jews from the Nazis during World War II. On the night of the work's Palm Beach debut, with a pickup orchestra, actors Cliff Robertson, Fritz Weaver, and *All My Children*'s Ruth Warrick performed the spoken roles of Wallenberg, Adolf Eichmann, and the Voice, respectively, as the audience—including Prince Sigvard and Princess Marianne Bernadotte of Sweden—sat spellbound. That evening, and after the following night's performance in Boca Raton, the standing ovations went on for five minutes. Critics called the sweepingly romantic score a perfect tribute to the hero who vanished in Russia, his fate unknown to this day. Many agreed it was a masterwork.

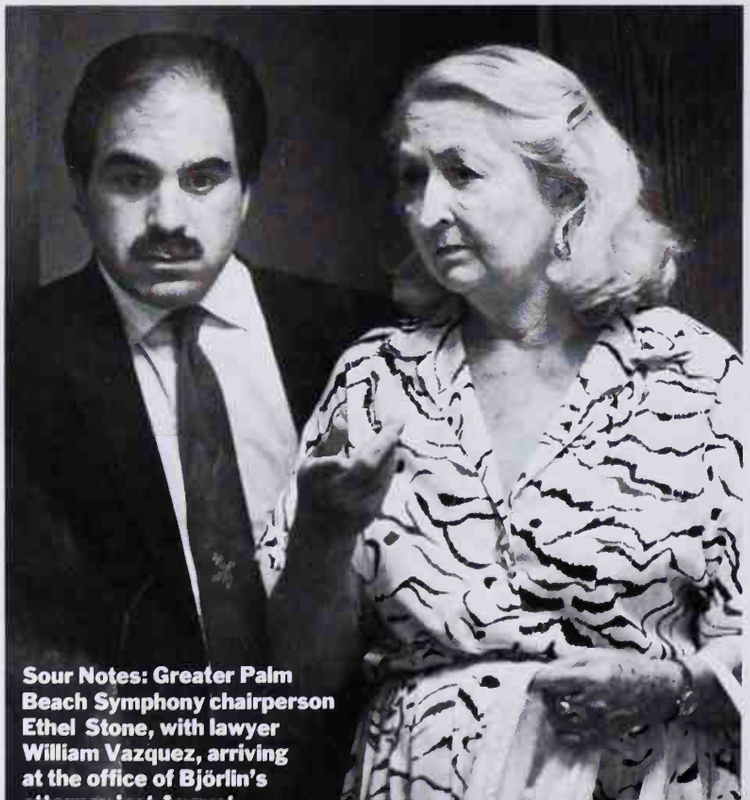
The next day Björlin was fired.

Ask any three people in Palm Beach why, and you're likely to get three different answers. They can agree on only the story's major characters, first among them Ethel Stone, the symphony's seventy-plus grande dame and major fund-raiser. Stone, who had once asked Björlin (in earnest) if Giuseppe Verdi was his cousin, had refused without explanation to allow the Greater Palm Beach Symphony to perform *Wallenberg*. (Most of its members ended up playing in the ad hoc orchestra anyway, on a free-lance basis.) There is Ulf Björlin himself, fifty-seven, an imposing six-foot-three Scandinavian with shoulder-length blond hair, his Iranian-born forty-something wife, Fary, and their six children. Then there are the Björlins' neighbors Billy and Susan Polan, who compared the Björlins' then nineteen-year-old daughter, Camilla, to a hooker and whose complaints about the couple, the Björlins say, contributed to Ulf's dismissal. The most serious accusations against Fary have been that she gives wild parties and says good-night too loudly to her guests.

To outsiders the moral of this comic tempest in a teapot seems to be that the people of Palm Beach wouldn't recognize genius if it walked among them, and that the heads of backwater cultural committees often live up to their stereotype. "Ulf Björlin's dismissal has nothing to do with music or the quality of his work," says Joe Conlin, once a musical director of the Greater Palm Beach Symphony and a former director of the Palm Beach Opera and the Chopin Foundation in Miami. "The decision was not made by musical professionals. He is the finest artist to come to Palm Beach in any performance capacity. [Palm Beach] should have been honored to have him."

"Ulf was an authentic European musician who wanted a quiet job where he could also compose. The symphony obviously had no idea what they had in him," suggests Juliette de Marcellus, the *Palm Beach Daily News* music critic. "They weren't interested in dealing with a real, authentic artist."

But among insiders, the overwhelming reaction to the local scandal has been shocked delight. Until the Kennedy scandal this past Easter weekend, things had been relatively dull there. The Björlins' problems with their neighbors and Ethel Stone gave Palm Beachers something to talk about last summer—and the pending million-dollar lawsuit filed by the Björlins against the Polans should keep everyone amused for another season. "Palm Beach hasn't had a noise complaint since Aristotle Onassis rented my home on Gulfview to Maria Callas," says longtime resident John Whelton. "The neighbors complained about the level of the diva's voice."



Sour Notes: Greater Palm Beach Symphony chairperson Ethel Stone, with lawyer William Vazquez, arriving at the office of Björlin's

The morning after the second performance of his composition, Ulf Björlin awoke with a sense of accomplishment that comes rarely, if at all, in an artist's career. In a mood he would later describe as elated, he sat down with his wife at the breakfast table of their $3,500-a-month rented South Woods Road home to read the glowing newspaper reviews. When the telephone rang, Fary went to answer it.

It was Ethel Stone. During the Björlins' three years in Palm Beach, Stone had become a close friend, of sorts, to "her" conductor's wife. The two had talked together about the most personal topics, to the extent that the older woman had reportedly once asked the younger for advice on how to effect a man's erection.

Stone's tone of voice this morning, however, was anything but friendly. "So when are you and the kids leaving Palm Beach?" she began. Stone had not attended either of the performances.

Fary wasn't sure she had heard the symphony board's chairperson correctly. "Is this a joke?" she asked.

"No," Stone quickly assured her. "Time for all of you to return the key and go back to Sweden."

A shocked Fary handed her husband the phone, and Stone informed him directly that his symphony contract would not be renewed. It had nothing to do with the Wallenberg piece, she told him.

Later that morning, the Björlins say, they heard a female voice coming from the direction of the Polans' house. It was chanting, "Maestro's dead. Maestro's dead."

MEN OF MUSIC HAVE LONG been forced to rely on wealthy patrons for their livelihood and for just as long have been subject to those patrons' tastes and whims. Beethoven accepted board

(Continued on page 86)

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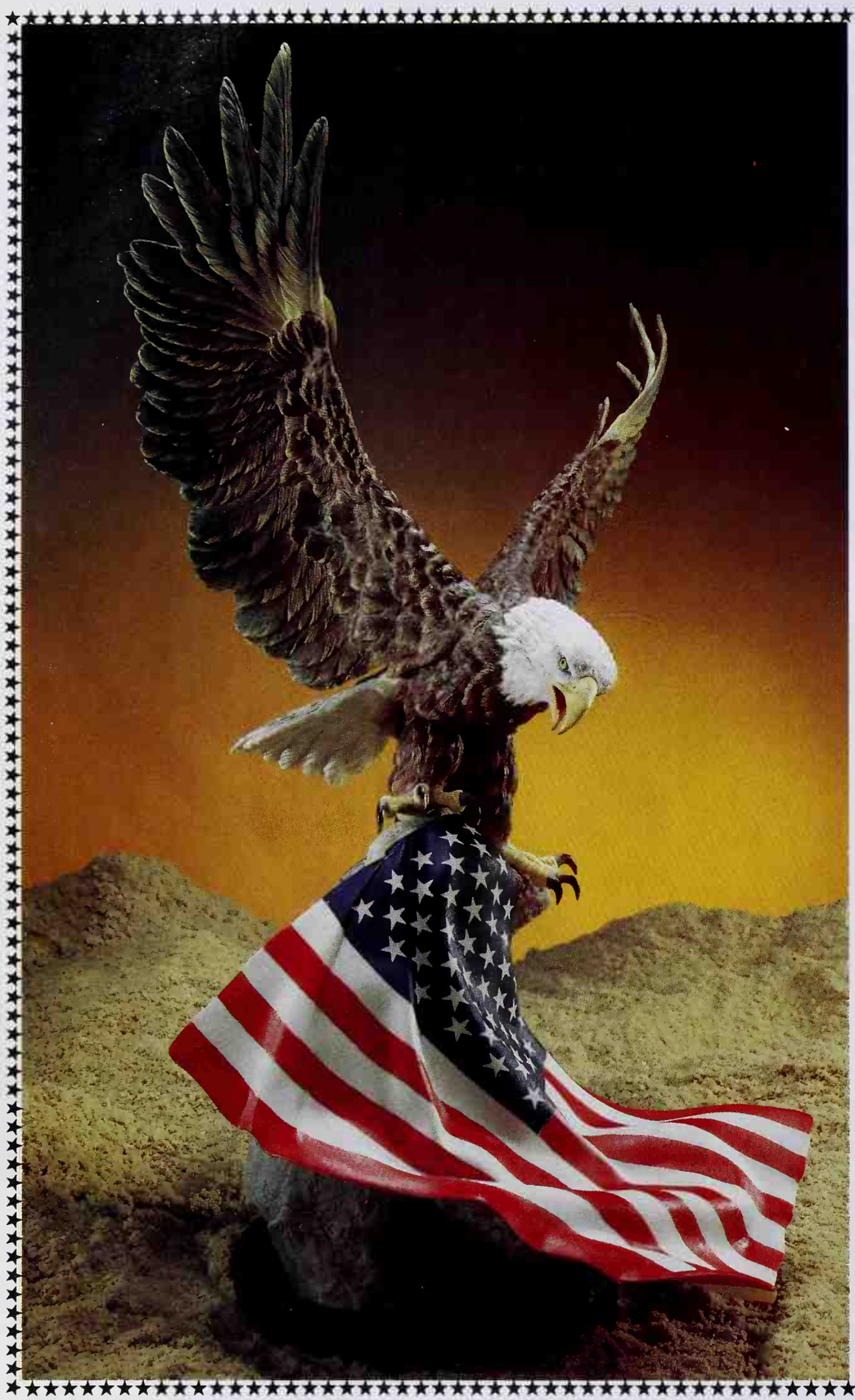

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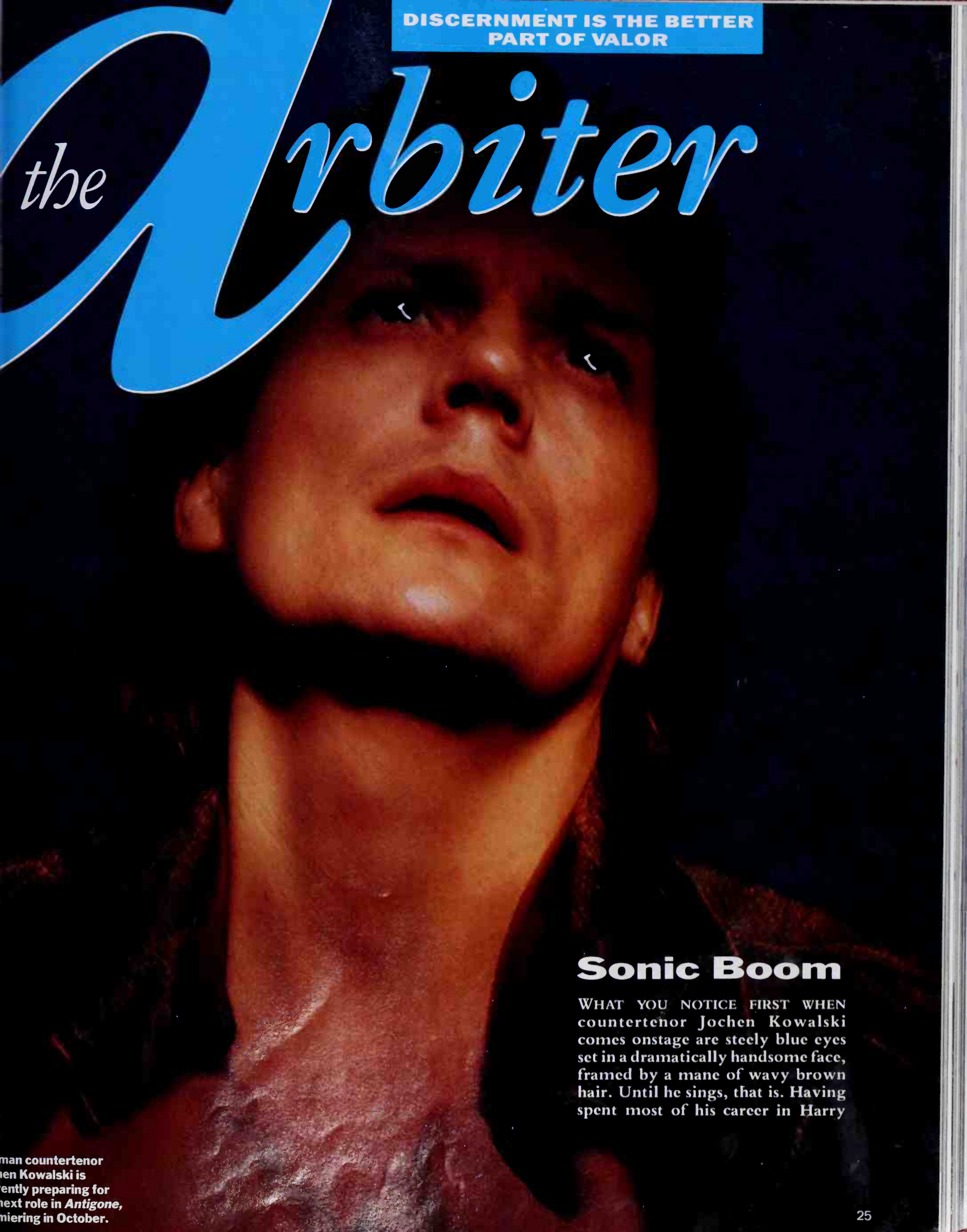


Sonic Boom

WHAT YOU NOTICE FIRST WHEN countertenor Jochen Kowalski comes onstage are steely blue eyes set in a dramatically handsome face, framed by a mane of wavy brown hair. Until he sings, that is. Having spent most of his career in Harry

man countertenor
hen Kowalski is
rently preparing for
next role in *Antigone,*
miering in October.

the Arbiter

Kupfer's ground-breaking Komische Oper in what was East Berlin, Kowalski is one of the opera circuit's long-endangered species of male altos whose voices rest eerily between male and female in a world of sonic androgyny. Known as the Mick Jagger of the opera world (in image if not in voice), Kowalski just finished touring in Kupfer's reinterpretation of Gluck's *Orpheus und Eurydice,* a mod, kitsch-laden production that some have called "Orpheo und Eurotrash." Kowalski sang a role written for a castrato and typically performed by a mezzo; despite mixed reviews for the extravaganza, Kowalski managed to engender genuine interest. "The attention centered on Jochen Kowalski, who . . . is one weird vocal phenomenon, a tall good-looking young man with the voice of an English mezzo. It took some getting used to," wrote Manuela Hoelterhoff of the *Wall Street Journal*. Said one opera aficionado, "He sings with his whole body, as opposed to most countertenors, who sing only from the chest. He is more like a regular tenor and far more powerful."

Cloaked in a battered brown leather jacket (a Berlin fashion staple), Kowalski answers questions in the cautious, deliberately polite manner of a person who has lived most of his life in a police state, smiling only when asked about his age (he's thirty-six, at the peak for a voice in his range) or about his origins. "Mrs. Kupfer found me while I was still a member of a chorus in Nuremberg—ten years ago last October—and I impressed her with how badly I was singing," joked Kowalski. He'll perform in July in Berlin at the Bach Festival and then begin rehearsals at the Komische Oper for a new production of *Antigone,* premiering in October. "For me, preparing is still the most difficult part of all," he says. "I have to go through all the emotion of the roles."

—Deborah Gimelson

A Boehm porcelain cardinal.

Vatican Angel

EVER SINCE EDWARD BOEHM OPENED a small porcelain studio in 1950, his wife, Helen, America's self-styled "Empress of Porcelain," has made Boehm an international name, bestowing Boehm wildlife replicas on dignitaries from Prince Charles to Chairman Mao. (Boehm's creations are so lifelike, Mao reportedly thought the swan figurines were the work of a taxidermist.) Now the indefatigable Brooklyn-born daughter of Italian immigrants has teamed with officials of the Vatican Museums to reunite what experts say is the most important Etruscan discovery in the world: the Guglielmi collection.

The ancient Etruscan pottery—including several fine pieces from Greece—gold jewelry, and bronze statues, dating from the seventh to third century B.C., were excavated from ancient tombs on the Guglielmi family's estate near Florence in the early nineteenth century. They were publicly displayed in the palace until 1900, when the collection was divided between two brothers. Thirty-five years later, one brother donated his half to the Vatican's Gregorian Etruscan Museum, and the Vatican has coveted the second half ever since.

"The other brother died several years ago but did not will his collection to the Vatican," Helen Boehm says. "In 1989, when the family finally agreed to a price, we *had* to buy it." Fearful that the wares would be put up for auction, where Boehm says they could easily have fetched $15 million, she quickly rounded up nine other "angels" and purchased the treasure for $1 million.

"We knew we had to reunite the collection," says Walter Persegati, former secretary and treasurer of the Vatican Museums, who oversaw the acquisition with Boehm. To house the now 1,500-piece Etruscan collection, the Gregorian Museum is currently revamping its exhibition space. The newly reconstructed museum, financed in large part by Boehm herself, will be inaugurated during a four-day gala from June 18 to 21, 1992. Boehm only hopes that when the Edward Marshall Boehm commemorative plaque is unveiled and the celebrations begin, she can coax the pope into black tie.

—Donna Louise Rautbord and Mary Kelly

Exchange of Vows: Helen Boehm with Pope John Paul II in 1989.

Ambassador to Italy Clare Boothe Luce, second from right, at a 1953 inner given by the America-Italy Society. Others, from left: Floyd Blair, sident of the society; Italian ambassador to the U. S. Alberto Tarchiani; and New York mayor Vincent Impellitteri.

Below,
Clare Boothe Luce's emerald and diamond Maltese cross, now for sale at Verdura in New York City.

A Cross to Bear

THERE WAS VERY LITTLE fate ever denied Clare Boothe Luce. She had brains, beauty, and two rich husbands—including Time Inc.'s founder, Henry Luce—and she triumphed as a playwright and a two-term Republican congresswoman from Connecticut.

But no degree of success offered Luce comfort when her only daughter, Ann, was killed in an auto wreck in 1944. For that, she turned to Catholicism, converting after receiving religious instruction from Monsignor (later Bishop) Fulton J. Sheen.

For material consolation Luce then turned to the dapper Sicilian duke-turned-society-jeweler Fulco di Verdura. At Verdura's she found this emerald and diamond Maltese cross brooch—the perfect symbol of her new-found faith.

An ancient heraldic motif and the emblem of the Knights of Malta, the design of the Maltese cross was appropriated by Verdura when he worked for the House of Chanel in Paris during the early thirties. Coco Chanel was seldom seen without the enamel cuff bracelets mounted with bold gem-set Maltese crosses that he designed.

When President Eisenhower named Clare Boothe Luce the U. S. ambassador to Italy in the early fifties, she, too, was seldom seen without her Verdura cross.

On April 19, 1988, following Luce's death the previous year, her collection of jewels and *objets de vertu* was offered at auction by Sotheby's New York. The Maltese cross brooch fetched $48,400. The same brooch is now available, back at Verdura, New York, for an estimated $150,000.

—Carlos A. Rosas

Acquiring Minds . . .

WANT TO OWN

REINALDO HERRERA, *socialite*

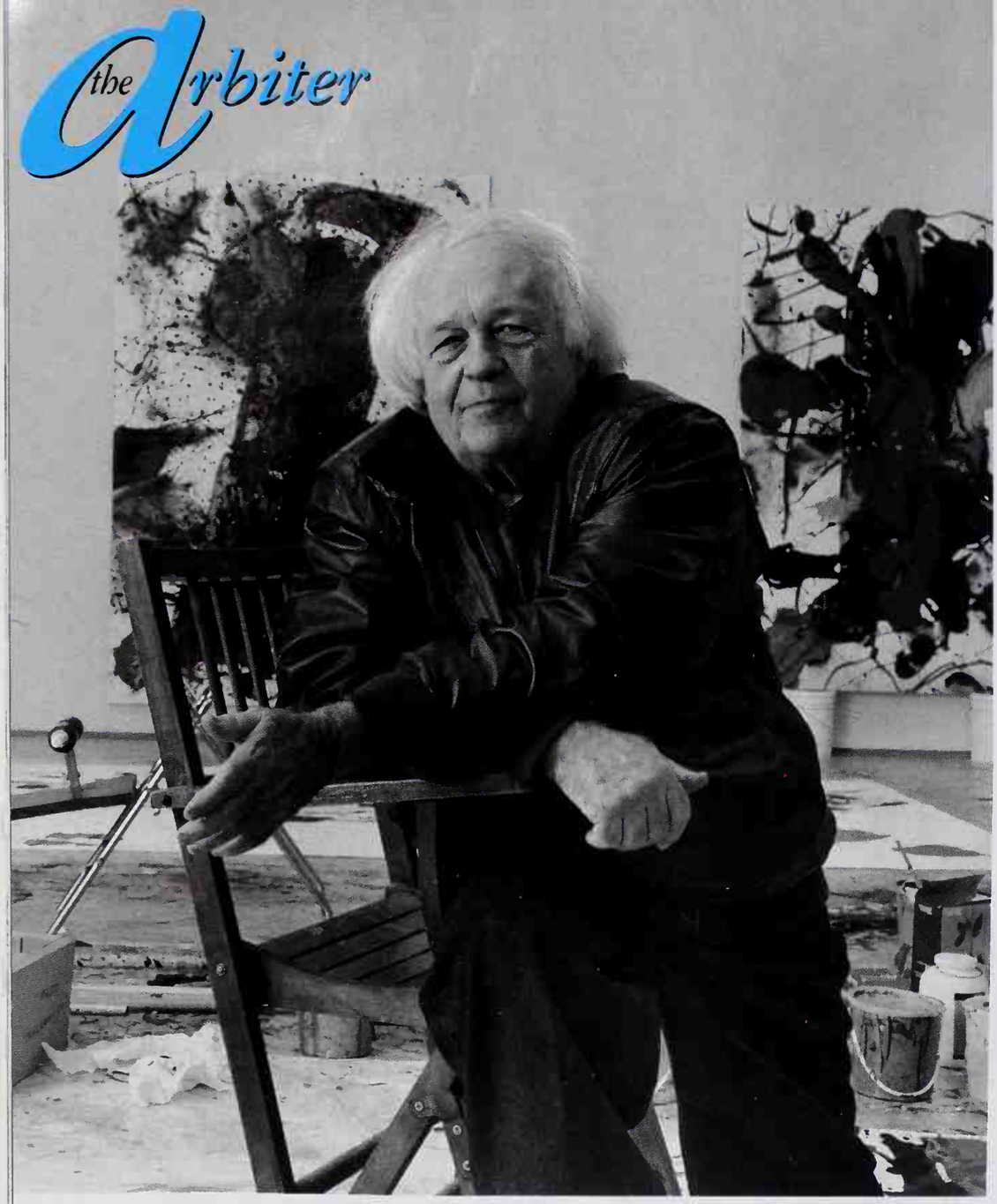
"A nineteenth-century Spanish inkwell actually inspired my collection of furniture some twenty years ago in Venezuela. I wanted a different desk to put the inkwell on, so I found a seventeenth-century Portuguese colonial one. Then I found an old Dutch chair to replace what I had. Soon I found a Spanish colonial four-poster bed with hangings. Next, I moved a silver lamp in from the family chapel and an old heraldic tapestry that I used as a rug. I still have the bronze inkwell—and all the furniture it inspired me to find for it."

SALLY JORDAN, *vintner*

"On a gastronomic pilgrimage to France in 1976, we stayed at Hôtel de L'Europe in Bourg-en-Bresse, and I fell in love with a Régence walnut *vaisselier horloge*—a sideboard with a clock—in the hotel restaurant. The owners wouldn't hear of selling it. Two years later—I certainly hadn't forgotten it—a Los Angeles French-furniture dealer, Pierre Bolduc of La Maison Française, spoke to the owners about the piece on my behalf. Finally the owner, by then a widow, said she would consider an 'adoption'—the term she used since she felt the *vaisselier* had been a member of her family for so long that another family would not merely be buying it. She asked for photos of our house and of my family, and asked about our life-style. A month after it arrived, she sent twenty-four antique Quimper porcelain plates that had always been on the sideboard with a note addressed to the *vaisselier:* 'I thought you would be lonely without your old friends.' I took a photo of my family in front of the piece with all the plates and sent it to her. I also send the widow Christmas cards every year signed 'Monsieur Vaisselier.' "

—Compiled by Carlos A. Rosas

TOP: MARY HILLIARD; BOTTOM: JERRY WHITE



Mixed Media: Artist and publisher Sam Francis in his Venice, California, studio.

Making Book

ARTIST SAM FRANCIS IS AN EXPANSIVE man who travels widely and ventures into foreign intellectual terrain while sitting in an armchair.

"I came to painting from literature," the sixty-eight-year-old Californian says. Books have taken him on head trips ever since he plucked a volume of Russian theosophist P. D. Ouspensky's writings off his mother's shelf in San Mateo, California, in 1937, at the age of fourteen. Even now, as an abstract expressionist of international renown, Francis is a voracious reader. He has a huge library and is always on the lookout for ideas that haven't yet been put between covers.

Little wonder, then, that Francis has established his own press. Little wonder also that the Lapis Press has three branches: limited-edition artists' books, letterpress books of poetry accompanied by Francis's own artwork, and a new line of trade books dealing with sophisticated approaches to art, critical theory, and literature. Most of the publications cross traditional boundaries and emerge as hybrids of art and thought.

"I know what I want to do with the press," Francis says, but realizing his visions is a constant challenge for an artist with a decidedly mystical bent. A short, stocky man with long white hair, he utters sentences that have an equivocal edge: "All the books we do are background music for what we want to do, because what we want to do is not necessarily what's been done."

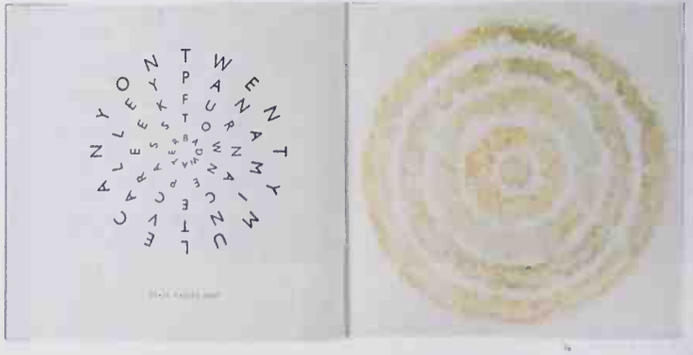
The Lapis Press, housed in Francis's capacious painting studio in Venice, California, has attracted considerable notice in the art world. *The Surrealists Look at Art,* a collection of essays edited by the internationally renowned museum director Pontus Hulten, recently won coveted design awards from the American Institute of Graphic Arts and The Art Directors Club, Inc. While unusual trade books such as this are making their way into avant-garde bookstores, Lapis's limited-edition artists' books are being snapped up by collectors.

Like artworks themselves, these lavishly produced books are generally published in editions of thirty-five or fewer and follow no formula. *Dust Dobros Desert Flowers,* for example, by British artist Richard Long, has seven full-page etchings using colored earth as pigment. Long collected the earth from Death Valley, California, and combined abstract images with concentric circles of text referring to desert locales. A phonograph record inserted in the back cover presents a musical composition by the artist performed on a Dobro, a guitarlike string instrument.

Ed Ruscha, the Los Angeles artist best known for his pop word paintings, has produced a sumptuous tome with an unwieldy title, *Flipping Kicking Howling Running Sitting Standing Climbing Telling,* which refers to eight etchings of silhouette images. *Flipping* is the written equivalent of a fish silhouette; *Standing* is a Spanish dancer in repose; *Climbing* is a truck chugging uphill. The etchings are bound in emerald-green calfskin with blind-embossed titles on the cover.

Los Angeles artist Greg Colson's volume, *Corn Belt,* explores geographic, visual, and literary notions of the Mid-

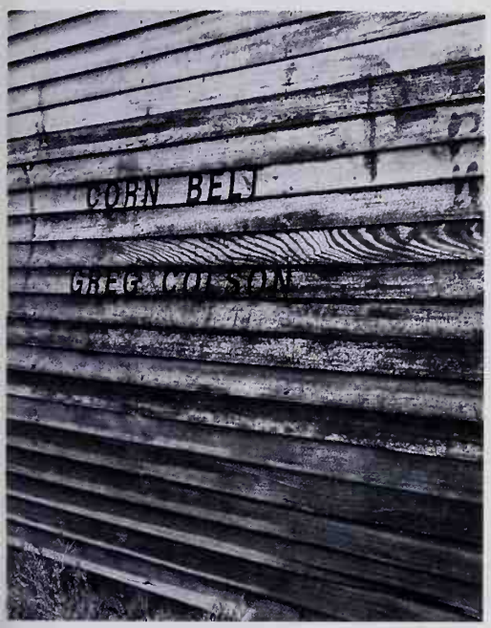
A peek into *Dust Dobros Desert Flowers,* a Lapis Press book by Richard Long.



west in various graphic mediums, including a foldout plate in photogravure.

"The artists like the idea that Sam is the publisher of their books," says Jerry Sohn, who has edited most of them. Francis grants the artists the luxury of time, and Sohn takes care of production.

No advertisements trumpet the books' merits. The limited-edition creations are sold primarily by subscription, press director Robert Shapazian explains. Prices start at $4,500 and rise as the supply dwindles. Buyers are institutions and private collectors around the world. Some subscribers buy every release, while others pick and choose. One of the press's best customers is the J. Paul Getty Trust's library, which has purchased nine limited-edition artists' books.



The slipcase for artist Greg Colson's book, *Corn Belt*.

Lapis subscribers are looking forward to promised releases of books by Americans William Wegman, Joe Goode, and Robert Therrien, British transplant David Hockney, German painter Anselm Kiefer, and Soviet conceptualist Ilya Kabakov.

As the press grows, Francis continues to paint biomorphic abstractions. His work was seen this spring in Bern, Paris, and Santa Monica, California, and will be on view in New York at the Gagosian Gallery through July 30. A major Francis retrospective will open in Bonn in the fall of 1992 and travel to Paris, New York, Tokyo, and Los Angeles.

—Suzanne Muchnic

the ear

WHAT WE HEARD THIS MONTH

by Richard Johnson

SOHO GOES HOLLYWOOD

When Willie Sutton was asked, "Why do you rob banks?" he was said to have replied: "I rob banks because that's where the money is." If Willie were around today, he'd be in Hollywood for the same reason.

With New York City's economy flatlining, and especially with its art market on the respirator, artists and their dealers are following Horace Greeley's advice and going West, old man.

Julian Schnabel is writing his first screenplay. His fashion model–painter girlfriend, Anh Duong, is about to act in her first film, *The Mambo Kings Play Songs of Love*. His dealer, Pace Gallery's Arnold Glimcher, is directing it. It's his directorial debut. And now David Salle is preparing to write and direct his first major motion picture.

Salle is working with filmmaker Amos Poe (*Alphabet City*, *Rocket Gibraltar*, and *Triple Bogey*) and Tony Spiridakis, who wrote and appeared in *Queens Logic*.

The upcoming film is *not* a sex, *lies*, *and videotape* of the art world, and it will not be called *Pinocchio Project*, as it was tentatively titled.

No one will say what the actual title is because "it's a historical pun that will give the whole project away," according to Julia "Jules" Pierrepont-Stromsted II. Who she? She's executive producer, which means she's lining up the $3.5 million shooting budget.

"That's the easiest part," says Jules, a descendant of J.P. Morgan. "When you come from thirteen generations of bankers, that's not a problem."

Jules describes the film as a "contemporary *Raging Bull*" and a "study of megalomania." Lord knows there is plenty of that in Soho.

There have already been two ominous signs that Salle has gone Hollywood. First, he made the *New York Post*'s Page Six gossip column just for having dinner with an attractive woman who wasn't his steady squeeze, dancer Karole Armitage. And second, he had his Lincolnesque ears surgically tucked. A friend defended the move, telling me: "He really *did* have big ears."

David Salle before he got pinned.

JUDY UNOBSCURED

A stroll through the streets of Manhattan with artist Judy Rifka is a distracting experience. Truck drivers say hello. She smiles and says hello back.

"Friend of yours?" you ask.

"No," she says, smiling.

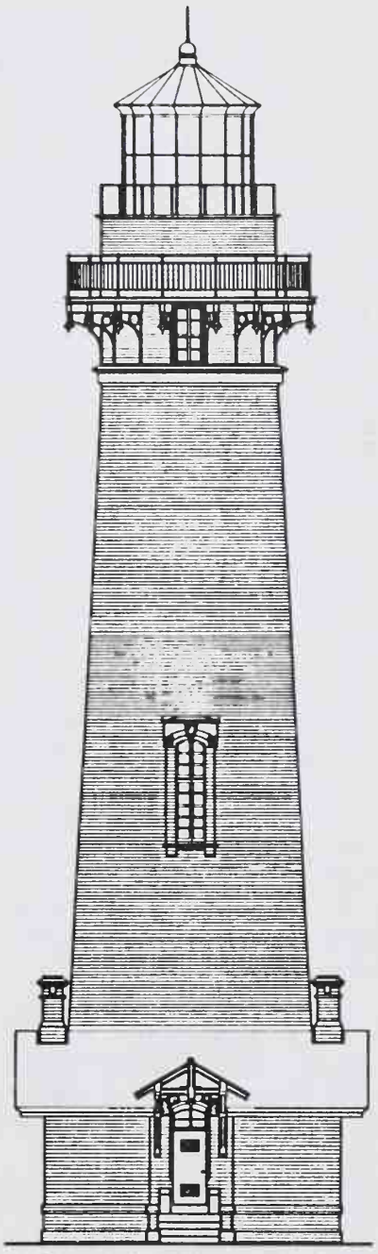
"I guess he wants to be."

Rifka, all five feet two inches of her, is the sexiest woman in the art world. The pocket rocket also has a thing about construction workers. She once met some who were working on a site outside the windows of her downtown loft.

"They're in great shape. They're crouching all the time. Strong backs. Strong legs," she says. "They know how to get the job done."

Rifka revealed her secrets at a sports bar across the street from Madison Square Garden, where she had just showed off one of her commissions, the twenty-foot-long floor-to-ceiling mural on the fourteenth floor of Two Penn Plaza. The mural shows boxers, hockey players, elephants, ice skaters, basketballers, and political conventioneers.

She's currently working on "the hot-tub commission," a job for a wealthy man in Palos Verdes, California. She's going to depict the



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the ear

sweeping view of the Pacific from his nude-filled tub.

A New York native, Rifka left at the age of eighteen and hitchhiked all through Europe. "I figured if I wanted to be an artist, I'd have to see all the great museums of the world."

Judy Rifka, "the sexiest woman in the art world."

She ended up living in a Victorian house outside London with a bunch of musicians, hanging out with Phil Ochs, Donovan, and especially Donovan's sidekick, Gypsy Dave. Back stateside, she also lived with some Native Americans on a Navajo reservation.

Her first big break as an artist was typically unplanned. "I had an appointment with the owner of the now-defunct Stefanotti Gallery. He had stood me up about twenty times. Again I schlepped my paintings to the gallery and he wasn't there. So I took them next door."

Next door was Brooke Alexander. "He said, 'Let me know when you have some new work.' I got an appointment for two weeks later. By then I had done twelve new paintings. I called them *The Twelve Feats of Hercules*." She's been represented by Alexander ever since, although this spring she did go out on loan to the hot East Village gallery Realart Inc.

Unabashedly heterosexual, Rifka doesn't enjoy the sisterhood of her fellow female artists. She considers the group a motley crew. "If they're such good artists, why can't they make themselves look good?" she asks. "They should just hold a picture up in front of their face."

CLIFF-HANGER

If bad luck comes in threes, Richard Avedon should cross his fingers. The photographer's house on a seventy-foot cliff near the lighthouse in Montauk, New York, is surrounded by the burned-out ruins of his neighbors.

On one side is the wreck of the windmill that fellow photographer Peter Beard had lived in. On the other is the skeleton of the 200-year-old stone house that antiques dealer Tony Ingrao was painstakingly restoring.

Beard, the former husband of Cheryl Tiegs, helped galvanize the international campaign to save the African elephant with his photos of widespread poaching in Kenya. He is also known for his quirky diaries, as well as huge books with his doodles and illustrations winding around photos and mementos he has pasted in. When the octagonal windmill burned down ten years ago, Beard lost thousands of negatives and prints, plus many of his diaries and his collection of the work of other artists. Beard blames a defective gas heater whose manufacturer has since gone belly up.

Avedon's neighbor Ingrao was hit on Super Bowl Sunday. The antiques dealer, operating out of offices on East Fifty-eighth Street in Manhattan, specializes in museum-quality French antiques. But the restoration of the stone house was pure Colonial.

When the project was featured two years ago in *HG* magazine, Ingrao was planning on replacing modern sliding glass doors with a set of old leaded panes. The "new" old doors are about the only things that weren't destroyed in the flames. The andirons in the huge living-room fireplace also survived, with their two brass balls on which Ingrao used to warm his hands. Less fortunate was the porcelain eagle Ingrao had found perched atop a general store in Ohio and bought for $5,000. The heat cracked the bird into several pieces.

Burning Down the House: Tony Ingrao's former Montauk cottage.

Neighbors blame the blaze on "either the wild Mexican caretaker or the new wiring." Both Beard and Ingrao plan to rebuild, despite the erosion that threatens to topple all three foundations into the surf below. Avedon, Beard, and Ingrao have all spent considerable sums bringing in boulders and rocks to protect the cliff, and they've planted grass to keep the bluff from slowly washing away.

Beard doesn't believe the cliff is jinxed, although he concedes that the neighborhood is fire-prone. "I was hit by lightning five times," he says. "And we couldn't be farther away from the fire department." □

Lacey Neuhaus Dorn, director of the Art in Embassies Program, in her State Department office with Frank Stella's lithograph *The Symphony* (1990, 81″ x 40″). A print of the work is hung in each of the 141 U.S. embassies throughout the world.

Loan Star

AS AN EIGHTEEN-YEAR-OLD, LACEY NEUHAUS LICKED envelopes, doing her part to support family friend George Bush's first race for the U.S. Congress. Twenty-five years later her candidate is president, and Lacey Neuhaus Dorn—who did successful stints as model, actress, and art dealer in the interim—is the Bush-appointed director of the Art in Embassies Program.

Neuhaus and her staff of seven are ambassadors themselves: their mission is to spread the word on American art by overseeing its adornment on the walls of 141 American embassies around the world. Today about 3,000 works of American art, worth almost $56 million, are on view. Whether lent or given by museums, galleries, or individuals, the shifting collection relies on Neuhaus and her team for its management, as well as for tending to the considerable costs and logistics of shipping, crating, and insurance.

An art-history major at Briarcliff College, in Briarcliff, New York, Neuhaus nearly had her academic career derailed by her good looks. Eileen Ford's campus scout wanted to whisk her away to become a model (her mother said no), and her roommate's brother wanted to whisk her away to become his wife.

The modeling career and the marriage to her roommate's brother did happen (the marriage lasted two years), but not until the soft-spoken yet determined Neuhaus graduated. Moving to New York City in 1972, Neuhaus ran into Eileen Ford by chance. Ford was still interested.

Modeling for all the best fashion magazines and designers, she spent after-hours with the Warhol crowd, having been introduced to them through Warhol's majordomo, Fred Hughes, her childhood friend from Houston. (Hughes had been her first dance partner at a coming-out party.) The fair-haired girl of the Warhol set, she graced *Interview* covers as well as those of fashion magazines.

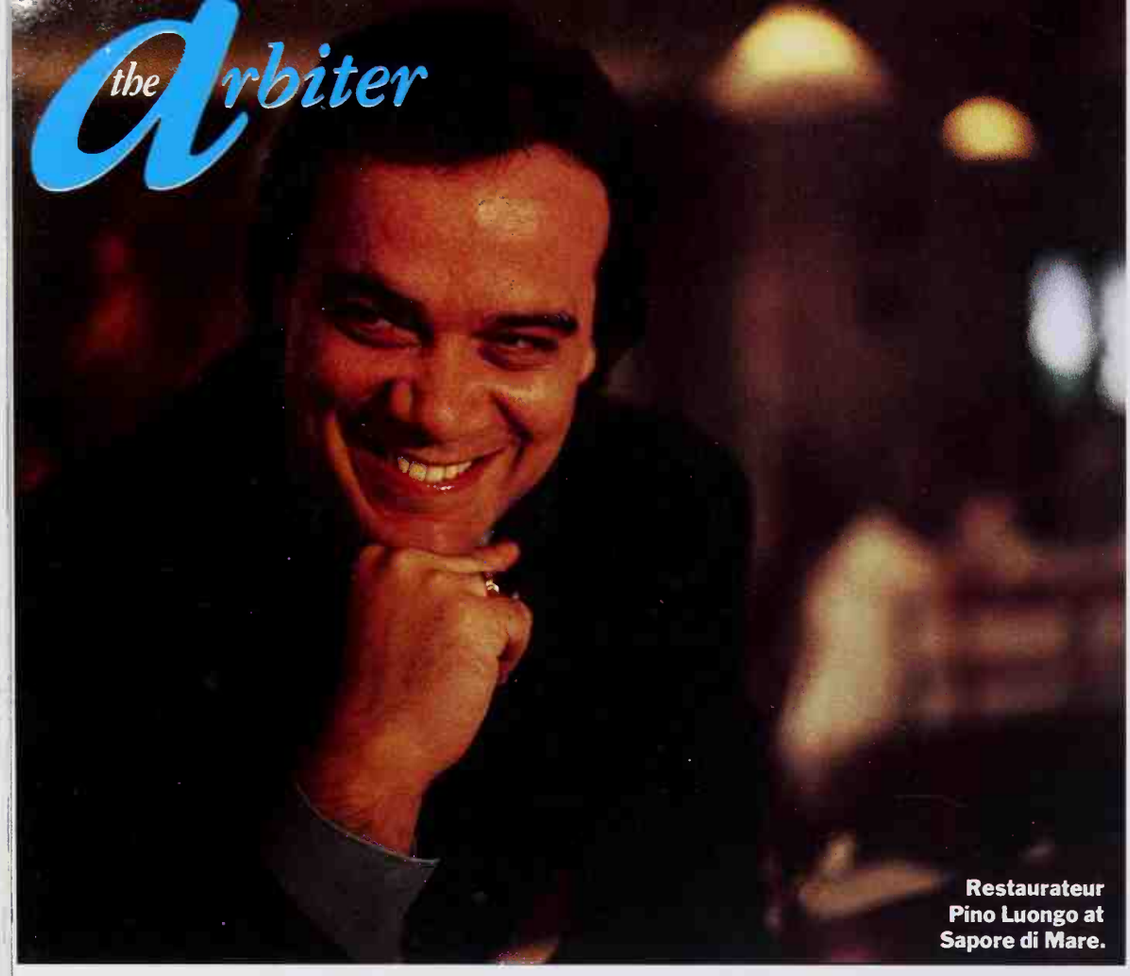
She also pursued an acting career, the highlight of which was a starring role in NBC's *From Here to Eternity*, opposite Don Johnson in 1980. When *Eternity* proved all too finite—ending after thirteen episodes—she moved to Washington to break into newscasting. But the news company where she was employed went broke. Finally, in 1983, she decided to move on and home—to Texas.

During a new career as a private art dealer there, Neuhaus became reacquainted with another Houston childhood friend. In 1987 she married that man, Dale Forster "Tucker" Dorn, a Texas oilman and art collector.

Lacey Neuhaus's spunk is notorious: en route to Washington in the late seventies for a party Katharine Graham gave for producer Sam Spiegel, she found her flight delayed by a thunderstorm and shampooed her hair in the tiny washbasin of the Eastern Shuttle. When she emerged from the washroom, the entire plane broke out in spontaneous applause.

Neuhaus approaches her latest job with characteristic intensity. "To many collectors, a loan or gift of their art is deeply patriotic, second only to risking a child." And she knows of what she speaks. In her younger days, she said, she expected neither motherhood nor a job in a bureaucracy. She now has both. The fifth Lacey in as many generations was born in 1988. "I swore I'd never do that to my child," she says, "but as soon as I had a little girl, I couldn't resist."

—Ina Ginsburg



Restaurateur Pino Luongo at Sapore di Mare.

TO DINE FOR

East End Story

There are over 100,000 hungry people in the Hamptons this summer, and fewer than 5,000 restaurant seats from Westhampton to Montauk.

by Steven Gaines

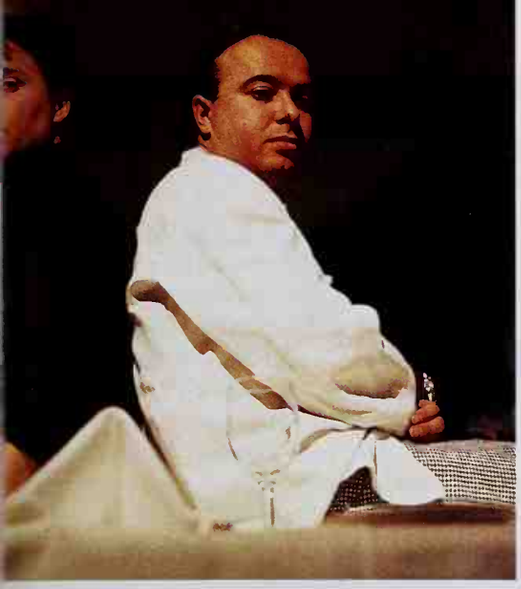
OVER THE YEARS THE HAMPTONS have become world famous for many things, including ducks and potato fields and Gin Lane mansions, but never for restaurants. The local dogma held that Hamptons restaurants weren't very good to begin with and dining out was strictly for day-trippers and tourists. After all, what was a weekend in the Hamptons all about if not a home-cooked meal in a bucolic setting with fresh (but overpriced) local produce and overimbibing houseguests on a warm summer's night?

Now, thanks to the recent proliferation of Manhattan-quality restaurants, dining out has become the new country imperative. And the influx to the Hamptons of a new-money, show-bizzy, dine-to-be-seen crowd makes a table reservation at one of the new hot Hamptons *salles à manger* more coveted than a Georgica Beach parking sticker. Indeed, would-be diners find it hard to come by almost any weekend reservation at one of the few decent restaurants on the East End. Philipp Manser, co-owner of the chic Basilico restaurant in Southampton, estimates there are fewer than 5,000 restaurant seats from Westhampton to Montauk available on any weekend night, and there are over 100,000 hungry, rich, and sophisticated diners vying for a place to dine out and to see and be seen.

Perhaps the eight hottest seats on any Saturday night in all the Hamptons are the four chairs each surrounding tables thirty-three and thirty-six in the elevated barroom at Sapore di Mare, the glittering million-dollar Tuscan seafood restaurant owned by New York restaurateur Pino Luongo (Le Madri). Thirty-three and thirty-six are the two "A" tables at a restaurant so popular that Luongo regularly turns away 800 reservations on a weekend night in summer. Competition for a table became so stiff at Sapore that Luongo finally decreed that ten tables had to be set aside exclusively for the nightly use of his regulars—or "people we don't want to upset," he says. "For some people, if you have to, you build a table rather than turn them away." This instant-table group comprises a sort of Hamptons gourmand mafia, the same set that seems to frequent all the Hamptons hot spots: Calvin and Kelly Klein, Christie Brinkley and Billy Joel, Lorne Michaels and friends, Bianca Jagger, Foreigner's Mick Jones and his wife Ann, and Paul Simon.

Even with a reservation, some customers will cool their heels for more than an hour at the long wooden bar until a table becomes available. So desperate was one young woman to have dinner at Sapore on a Saturday night that she phoned up and claimed she was Liza Minnelli. When the lady arrived and she clearly was not Ms. Minnelli, the gracious maître d', Cesare Dell' Aguzzo, accommodated her anyway. But she got a stiff lecture along with her check. (The very next night, when the real Liza called for a table, she had a lot of convincing to do to get her reservation.) On another occasion one wealthy young climber tried to press a $1,000 bill into Cesare's palm in an attempt to have Cesare guarantee him a weekly table. Cesare pressed right back.

Sapore is located in a 1910 Tudor mansion where Georgica Pond meets the Montauk Highway in Wainscott, on the site of several failed restaurants. Things got so bad that a rumor started circulating that the tile-topped mansion was cursed by the ghost of a former owner, a society matron named Mrs. Wolff, who didn't want her property used for a restaurant. Evidently Mrs. Wolff likes the smell of garlic and the looks of Martha Stewart and Kim Basinger and Alec Baldwin in her dining room, because Sapore has been grossing nearly $2 million annually. (Most



Philipp Manser, *left*, and Pietro Vardeu at their Southampton bistro, Basilico.

Hamptons restaurateurs estimate they must earn 75 percent of their annual grosses during the swollen three-month season.)

When it first opened in 1988, it was at least as famous for its attitude as it was for its food. "Arrogant, noisy, packed with New Yorkers admiring themselves" was the verdict of Granny Poo's, the blue book of East End restaurant critiques.

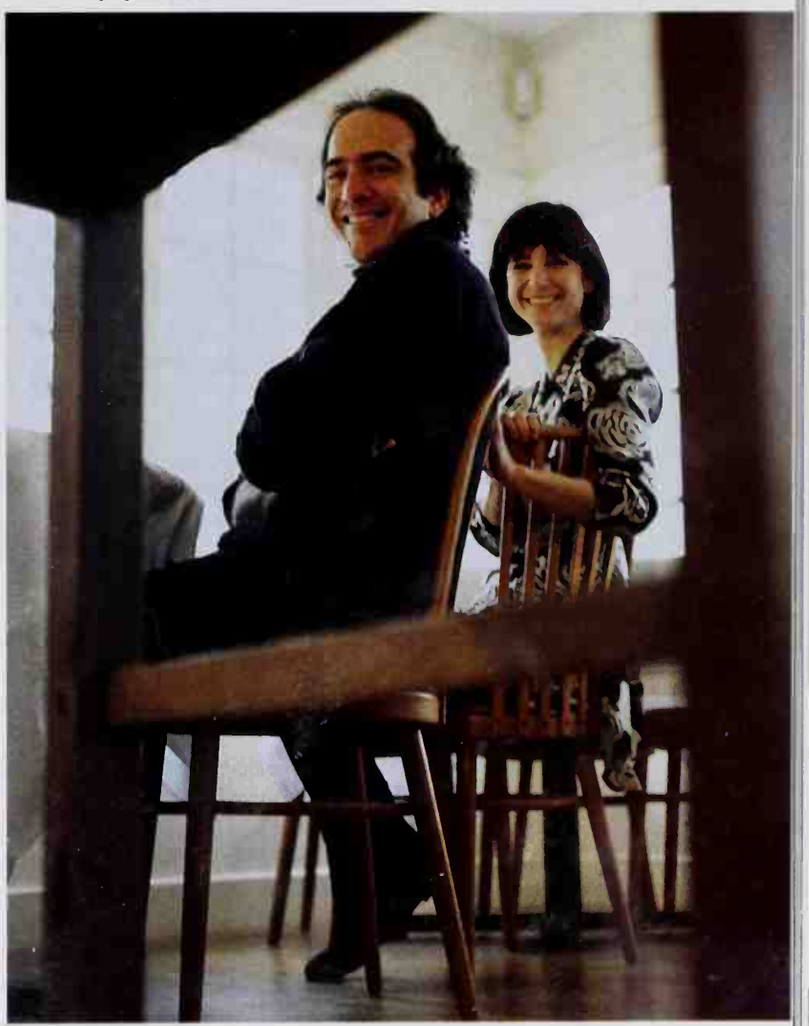
When Sapore's then-manager Pietro Vardeu and former staffer Philipp Manser left to open Basilico, it didn't sit too well with Pino Luongo. Basilico turned out to be nearly a duplicate of Sapore, right down to the terra-cotta tiles on the floor and the handstrung, glass-bead $1,500 lamp shades. Luongo threatened to sue Vardeu, citing, among other violations, "menu plagiarism." The suit never materialized, but this season Pino Luongo says he's changing Sapore's entire menu and "elevating his cooking two steps over what anyone else can touch." Nevertheless, swept along by its reputation as Sapore's "little sister" restaurant (it has only seventeen tables), Basilico was a smash hit from the moment Vardeu and Manser opened its doors.

Reservations aren't much easier to come by at Nick & Toni's, in East Hampton, perhaps the best culinary treat on the East End, but at this pleasant and airy Italian restaurant you'll find the atmosphere much less formal and stressed. The staff seems to know the regulars by their first names, Calvin and Kelly, Jann and Jane, Christie and Billy, and it's not surprising to occasionally find fragrance executive Richard Barrie helping out by bartending for an hour when things get backed up, or to notice Chevy Chase pick up a ringing phone and take a reservation. There were also a couple of nights last season when Steve Ross, chairman and co-CEO of Time Warner Inc., handed out menus and seated customers, but only because the eponymous Toni is his daughter and "Nick" is his son-in-law, Jeff Salaway. Craig Claiborne was one of the first customers in the door to Nick & Toni's, and he returned three nights in a row, always ordering the grilled quail. Since then there has never been a single summer night when the restaurant's fifteen tables were not sold out. This year Nick & Toni's has built a spacious new wing that will add, alas, only eight more tables.

Three other Hamptons restaurants deserve mention as top local culinary draws for the discerningly hungry. They never took reservations at the Laundry restaurant in East Hampton to begin with. This ever popular brick-and-beamed room opened in 1980 on the site of an old commercial laundry, in part with backing by Bob Fosse, Liza Minnelli, and ICM agent Sam Cohn. At the Palm in East Hampton, the outpost of the noisy New York steak house, people wait for tables in a lounge that's even bigger than the dining room itself. And artistic types seem to be drawn to the Old Stove Pub in Sagaponack, where the chops are five inches thick and *any* table is the A table in the living room of this small, crowded Victorian shingle house. In fact, the etchings by Salle and Schnabel hanging on the walls of the Old Stove Pub have been loaned to the Greek family that runs the place as chits to ensure them a table on a busy Friday night. But in the ever-so-glamorous Hamptons, even being celebrated doesn't seem to guarantee special attention. When Bianca Jagger called the Tex-Mex restaurant Little Rock Rodeo to say she had left her sunglasses behind and asked the waiter to check the table where she sat, he insisted that she spell out her name before he went to look.

Of some consolation to the 95,000 people who can't get a table anywhere on a Saturday night is that on Sunday morning, life remains democratic at the Bridgehampton Candy Kitchen. This is an immaculate luncheonette that still makes its own ice cream and homemade crab salad sandwiches. Although there's bound to be a wait for a table—because the food is good and reasonably priced—the Candy Kitchen is one place where Ronald Lauder and Tom Wolfe and their families can eat in the same dining room with nobody trying to tip the maître d'. □

Toni Ross, daughter of Time Warner Inc. head Steve Ross, runs the popular Nick & Toni's with her husband, Jeff Salaway.

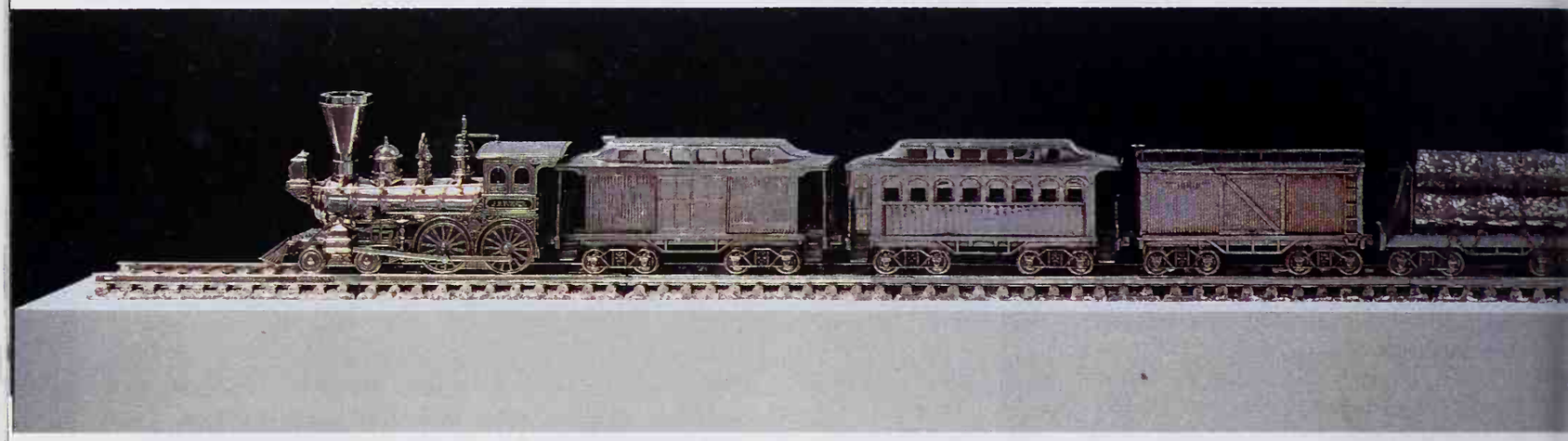


THE COCKTAIL HOUR

Bourbon: Spirit of the South

The down-home flavor of bourbon has finally gone global.

by Joni Miller



IT'S BEEN CALLED EVERYTHING FROM DIXIE NECTAR AND Liquor Joy to Old Friend. It's bourbon, the legendary liquid embodiment of the American spirit, a democratic drink savored by devotees who run the gamut from Chanel-suited arbiters of taste to good old boys, and from oratorically inclined politicos to CEOs and college students. And now, right up there with such icons of American consumerism as Levi's and Coca-Cola, bourbon has gone global, benefiting from a phenomenal upswing in sales abroad, where trendy young drinkers in Japan, Australia, and parts of Europe (especially Germany and France) have discovered its unique flavor. In Japan, which frenetically leads the world in bourbon imports, it's the chic drink in hip music clubs and the sole attraction at innumerable whiskey-only bars, where its all-American imagery has lent the liquor an ineffable cachet and an aura rivaled only by trinkets from Tiffany.

The Japanese fascination with bourbon is as informed as it is intense. Not so long ago a Japanese journalist spent many hours at the Oscar Getz Museum of Whiskey History, in Bardstown, Kentucky. The visit's purpose? Research for a forthcoming volume, *The Book of Bourbon Whiskey—Part II,* a catalog-size compendium containing photos of every shred of bourbon memorabilia and paraphernalia housed in the museum itself.

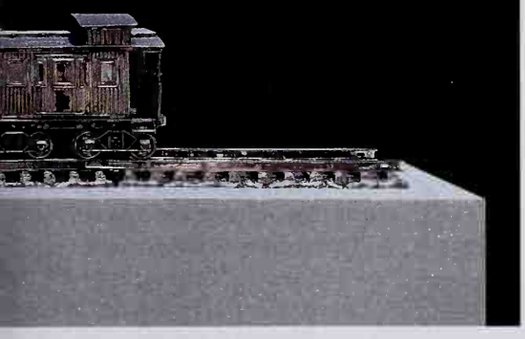
Bourbon is a drink whose historic roots mirror the folklore of America's colorful, fiercely independent frontier past. Back when streams still sparkled and the social life of early Kentucky settlers revolved around quilting bees and barn raisings, the native corn grown on most farms was a staple for both man and beast, and the "good spirits" distilled by settlers were an accepted medium of exchange. With the prohibitive cost of transporting milled corn to the eastern markets, it was not long before some bright fellow figured out that by converting the crop to whiskey, a horse could carry the equivalent of a dozen bushels of corn to the nearest trading post.

The crystal-clear water used to distill the whiskey was another pivotal element in the early days of bourbon's development. Central Kentucky sits on a deep shelf of limestone, which acted as a filter on the streams running through it, leaving the water free of the iron and minerals that might adversely affect the product's taste. Kentucky whiskey didn't actually become bourbon until the Reverend Elijah Craig, a Kentucky-based Baptist preacher who took pleasure in an occasional nip, reportedly devised the prototype in the spring of 1789, when he accidentally charred the inside of one of the barrels he was using to transport his homemade liquor (a combination of limestone-pure springwater and corn with some rye and barley malt) by barge to the New Orleans market. The thrifty Craig used the charred barrel anyway, and a few months later, when the whiskey had made its voyage downriver, it was discovered that it had taken on added color and balance by absorbing tannic acid and caramel from the scorched wood. He distilled his whiskey in Bourbon County (named in honor of the French who aided the Colonists in the Revolutionary War); hence, the liquor's name.

In the early days, bourbon was sold and shipped to taverns in barrels, accompanied by a few fancified empty bottles. Since the barrels were unsealed, the quality of the whiskey varied depending on whether an unscrupulous middleman had diluted it or substituted one brand for another. Once at the tavern, the liquor was poured into the decanters, which were etched with the distillers' brand name. George Garvin Brown, the founder of Old Forester, is credited with being the first to bottle and seal bourbon in glass in 1870. Soon other

distillers followed suit, and Brown's sensible solution established an early form of bourbon quality control.

Bourbon is all-American literally as well as figuratively, for it is decreed by federal law that bourbon may be made only in the United States from a fermented mash of grain containing a minimum of 51 percent corn (though the percentage may run as high as 75 percent) and aged for a minimum of two years in charred oak barrels that may be used only once. Varying percentages of other grains such as rye, barley, and wheat are also allowed. The mysterious changes in color (from clear to amber) and flavor (from raw pungency to smoothness) wrought during bourbon's maturing process are a function of the barrels in which it ages. As the bourbon expands and contracts in and out of the red layer of caramelized wood behind the charred layer, the liquor's taste, bouquet, and rich color develop. The charred oak gives bourbon its color.



Whiskey a Go-Go: Jeff Koons, *Jim Beam J.B. Turner Train* (1986, cast stainless steel), Jim Beam bourbon decanters.

Faithful purists drink bourbon neat from a small snifter or tulip glass in the same fashion that an elegant cognac is enjoyed. In concert with other liquids, bourbon is also the pivotal ingredient in a myriad of mixed drinks from manhattans, old-fashioneds, and whiskey sours to ambrosially festive, highly ceremonial mint juleps that are synonymous with Kentucky Derby time and languid afternoons of dawdling on verandas.

Although there are more than 200 bourbons distilled in the United States, the current best-sellers in the premium category include the number-one-selling Jim Beam along with Jack Daniel's Black Label, Early Times, Evan Williams (the fastest-growing brand), Ancient Age, Ten High, Old Crow, Wild Turkey, Old Grand-Dad, and Old Charter. Cold-hearted sales figures, of course, are not the whole story. It's important to bear in mind that emotions run high among bourbon fans when it comes to their elixir of choice.

Many less prominent brands have achieved cult status. For example, Rebel Yell (with its "whisper of wheat"), widely known as the Spirit of the South, is a cult bourbon once available only below the Mason-Dixon line. Since 1984 it has been sold in a handful of northern states, a source of enormous solace to Yankees who once relied on the kindness of both friends and strangers to lug Rebel Yell back for them from trips south. Given its colorful moniker, it seems only fitting that one of Rebel Yell's most prominent fans was Rolling Stone Keith Richards (in his drinking days), whose much publicized penchant for the drink made more than one headline. Another raucous rocker, Billy Idol, immortalized the drink in a namesake song.

What's new on the bourbon front beyond old favorites and the awe-inspiring statistics of consumption abroad is a small, newly emerging category of elite, superpremium bourbons and Tennessee whiskeys that are higher priced than premiums, often luxuriously and inventively packaged, and targeted at the same consumers intrigued by single-malt whiskeys. A single-barrel, ninety-three-proof spirit, Blanton's Bourbon, named after the dean of American distillers, Colonel A. B. Blanton, is blended, bottled, and labeled by hand in Frankfort, Kentucky. Blanton is what is known as a barrel bourbon—it is bottled right from the barrel without filtering and is not cut with water. Each squat decanter is jauntily sealed with a cork top bearing a horse and jockey before it is tucked into a velvet pouch.

From Jim Beam, distillers of the nation's number-one-selling bourbon, there is mellow Booker Noe, named in honor of the company's master distiller—who just happens to be Jim Beam's grandson. Produced in Clermont, Kentucky, and bottled straight from the barrel, it is around 126 proof. Introduced several years ago, the dry, spicy Elijah Craig superpremium, aged a full twelve years and bottled at ninety-four proof, is named after the Baptist minister said to have accidentally produced the first bourbon. It is made by Heaven Hill, the biggest remaining family-owned distillery in the United States.

Dixie Nectar: A Wild Turkey decanter by Wedgwood and a pair of English cut-glass tumblers, circa 1820.

The distinctive Maker's Mark, from Kentucky's smallest distillery, in the hills of Loretto, is a "boutique" bourbon. A mere thirty-eight barrels a day are produced. The operation is headed by colorful Bill Samuels, Jr., a seventh-generation bourbon maker whose succinct definition of a great bourbon bears repeating: "If you can hold it on your tongue without blowing your ears off, it meets the test." The brand takes its name from the maker's mark stamped on Samuels's mother's antique pewter collection, and each bottle is hand-dipped in red wax that dribbles decoratively down the sides. Lush, complex, and richly flavored, this is a bourbon that pleasurably expands in the mouth.

Wild Turkey, whose aficionados include creative types such as gonzo journalist Hunter S. Thompson and tongue-in-cheek cartoonist Garry Trudeau, originated as a hospitable

gesture for a clique of wealthy sportsmen who met annually in South Carolina for a wild-turkey hunt. An avid hunter, the late Tom McCarthy, Sr., decided his companions should have their own special brand of bourbon. Aged eight years in the barrel and made from a coarse-ground mash of 75 percent corn, Wild Turkey, the biggest-selling superpremium, is a brilliantly colored, full-bodied bourbon with a deep vanillin tone and a lingering finish. It is produced in eighty proof and a less docile 101 proof.

George Dickel and Jack Daniel's, which are Tennessee whiskeys, are customarily included in the bourbon category, though technically they do not qualify as such. Just before going into barrels for aging, they are slowly filtered through a multilayered maple-charcoal filter in an extra step. Each is made from the same grains used in bourbon, which at the very least makes them bourbon's kissing cousins, though fans of Tennessee "sippin' " whiskey believe it drinks more smoothly than bourbon.

Jack Daniel's, distilled in the homespun southern hamlet of Lynchburg, Tennessee (population 361), is the third-largest-selling domestic whiskey, its famous black-labeled square bottle a dominant force on the whiskey scene. The precocious Daniel, who learned the distiller's craft at the age of seven and bought his own still at thirteen, formally registered his distillery with the U.S. government in 1866, thus making it the oldest registered distillery in the country. Now Jack Daniel's has an urbane, upscale sibling that has a slightly lower alcohol content in response to consumer preferences in the 1990s. Introduced three years ago, Daniel's entry into the superpremium market is eighty-proof Gentleman Jack, a fruity, smooth-as-cognac, smoky whiskey produced in limited quantities and sold in finely fluted, hand-labeled bottles wrapped in black tissue. Its distinctive taste and silken smoothness—the result of charcoal filtering twice, before and after aging—is best savored in a snifter after dinner, though it can be served on the rocks or with water.

George Dickel Tennessee Sour Mash Whisky, which shares the special Tennessee whiskey category with Jack Daniel's, is the choice of discriminating drinkers who value its clean dryness, hint of sweetness, and crisp finish. Produced in eighty- and ninety-proof versions, its label omits the *e* in *whiskey,* some say because Dickel felt his product was the equal of the finest Scotch whisky. Others attribute the omission to his poor spelling.

Rife with the romance of America's rough-and-tumble past, bourbon has also inspired some rather potent poetics. Bernard DeVoto, in *The Hour,* described true bourbon as a waking "delight like any great wine with a rich and magical plentitude of overtones and rhymes and resolved dissonances and a contrapuntal succession of fleeting aftertastes." In a more earthbound vein, it is said that on an excursion abroad, Mark Twain claimed to customs inspectors that he was traveling only with clothing. As an inspector turned up a carefully cosseted bottle of bourbon from his suitcase, Twain promptly identified it as his "much needed nightcap." □

Glass Act

How do you make a fine wine even finer? Serve it in a Riedel glass.

by Suzanne Hamlin

A RIEDEL GLASS IS INSTANTLY RECOGNIZABLE, STANDING straight and tall, regal and refined. With a breathtakingly thin stem and a rigorously simple bowl of almost paper-thin crystal, the glasses are a joy to pick up, to hold, to drink from. But it's not just their fragility that makes them enchanting. Once you've drunk a wine—any wine—from a Riedel glass there is no turning back, no settling for familiar mediocrity. Even a casual wine drinker can appreciate the Riedel experience, but for the wine-enthralled it is tantamount to an epiphany.

"It's like tasting wine for the first time," says one passionate oenophile, a man of logic and discernment not easily given to loose superlatives.

Each Riedel glass directs its contents to the place on the tongue that picks up the best characteristics of the wine. It's a concept guaranteed to be greeted by skepticism.

"It sounded unbelievable to me, something like Pyramid Power," says California vineyard owner Robert Mondavi. "But it's absolutely true. The wines simply taste better in Riedel glasses."

"I wouldn't use any other glasses," says Joachim Splichal, the German-born owner and chef of Patina, the wildly heralded restaurant in Los Angeles. Splichal thinks the expense of the glasses (about twice what a good, standard crystal wineglass costs) and the replacement factor (about twice the usual breakage rate) are justified by the reactions of customers. "Our clientele recognizes right away that these are fantastic glasses. Everyone comments on them. And wine and food societies come here not just because of the food and the setting but because of this magnificent stemware."

Relatively new to the United States, the Austrian-made Riedel (rhymes with *needle*) glasses are everywhere in Europe, ubiquitous in Michelin-starred German, French, and Italian restaurants. But in this country, Riedel has been slow to catch on, although there is an active U.S. distribution company in Bohemia, New York. Those who have taken the plunge include Wolfgang Puck in Los Angeles, who uses them at Spago and Postrio, and Leonce Picot, who stocks them at his four restaurants: 1001 Nob Hill in San Francisco, La Vieille Maison in Boca Raton, and The Down Under and Casa Vecchia in Fort Lauderdale.

TEN GENERATIONS OF THE RIEDEL FAMILY WERE APPARENTly all born with good glass genes. The family-owned glassworks in Kufstein, Austria, a 235-year-old company that began in Bohemia, is as well known for its line of crystal tableware—bowls, vases, candlesticks—as it is for its wineglasses. Through the years the Riedels have been innovators

in both the art and the science of glassmaking, creating the colored glass used in everything from jewelry to traffic lights, inventing the glass pistons used in radar screens, and recognizing the relationship between the size and shape of a wineglass and the taste of its contents.

Georg Riedel, the forty-one-year-old son of Claus Josef and the tenth generation of his family to head the company, is an energetic marketer as well as innovator, a marathon runner with an engineering degree.

There are over forty varieties of Riedel glasses, but five of them will fill most wine drinkers' needs: the Burgundy Grand Cru, the Bordeaux Grand Cru, the Chardonnay, the Champagne, and the Riesling. The Burgundy Grand Cru holds thirty-seven ounces, more than a bottle of wine. Its size and shape allow the Pinot Noir aromas to bloom in the glass, to explode in the nose, and the slightly outwardly curved lip of the glass tempers the acidity of the wine. (It works magic, too, with Rhône wines.) The oversize Bordeaux Grand Cru, with its slightly inwardly curved lip, smooths out the edges of a young, highly tannic wine, helping it to achieve an elegance usually attained only through age.

In an ordinary wineglass the wine is projected to the center of the tongue in a fairly wide flow. This is fine for perfectly balanced wines, but not all wines are. Riedel has allowed for specific differences and for the fact that taste is zoned on the tongue.

In a young, acidic white wine—a Riesling, for example—the sweetness of the wine should be emphasized, deflecting acidity. The thin-wall Riesling glass, with its slightly curved-out lip, catapults the wine to the tip of the tongue in a narrow stream. The Chardonnay glass directs the wine to the center of the tongue, balancing the fruitiness and the tartness of the full-bodied, moderately high-alcohol wine.

Riedel's Sommeliers series of twenty handmade lead-crystal glasses ranges from $49.50 to $70 a stem. This series includes two cognac glasses, the ultimate martini glass, and sherry, port, and bitters glasses, as well as a wide-ranging selection of red, white, and sparkling-wine glasses. Also available is the Sommeliers Connoisseur set, a boxed starter kit of five different glasses for $335.

The Vinum line, thirteen machine-made lead-crystal glasses, is similar to the Sommeliers series and available in many of the same shapes. Priced from $15 to $22.50 each, they are what most restaurants use. Good sources for Riedel stemware are the Wine House in Los Angeles, the Crystal Cave in Chicago, Flemington Cut Glass in Flemington, New Jersey, and Bloomingdale's in New York.

New this year, Riedel's Ouverture line consists of six glasses: one each for red wine and white wine, one for chardonnay, an oversize Bordeaux glass, a glass for champagne and sparkling wines, and a beer glass. Although they are made of thin glass, they don't deliver wine with quite the finesse of the Sommeliers and Vinum examples. The Ouverture line is sold at Bloomingdale's and Macy's; glasses cost $8.50 apiece.

For more information on sources for all the stemware, call 516-567-7575 or write to Riedel Crystal of America, 24 Aero Road, Bohemia, NY 11716.

Taster's Choice: Four Riedel wineglasses, *from left to right,* the Bordeaux Grand Cru, the Chardonnay, the Riesling, and the Burgundy Grand Cru.

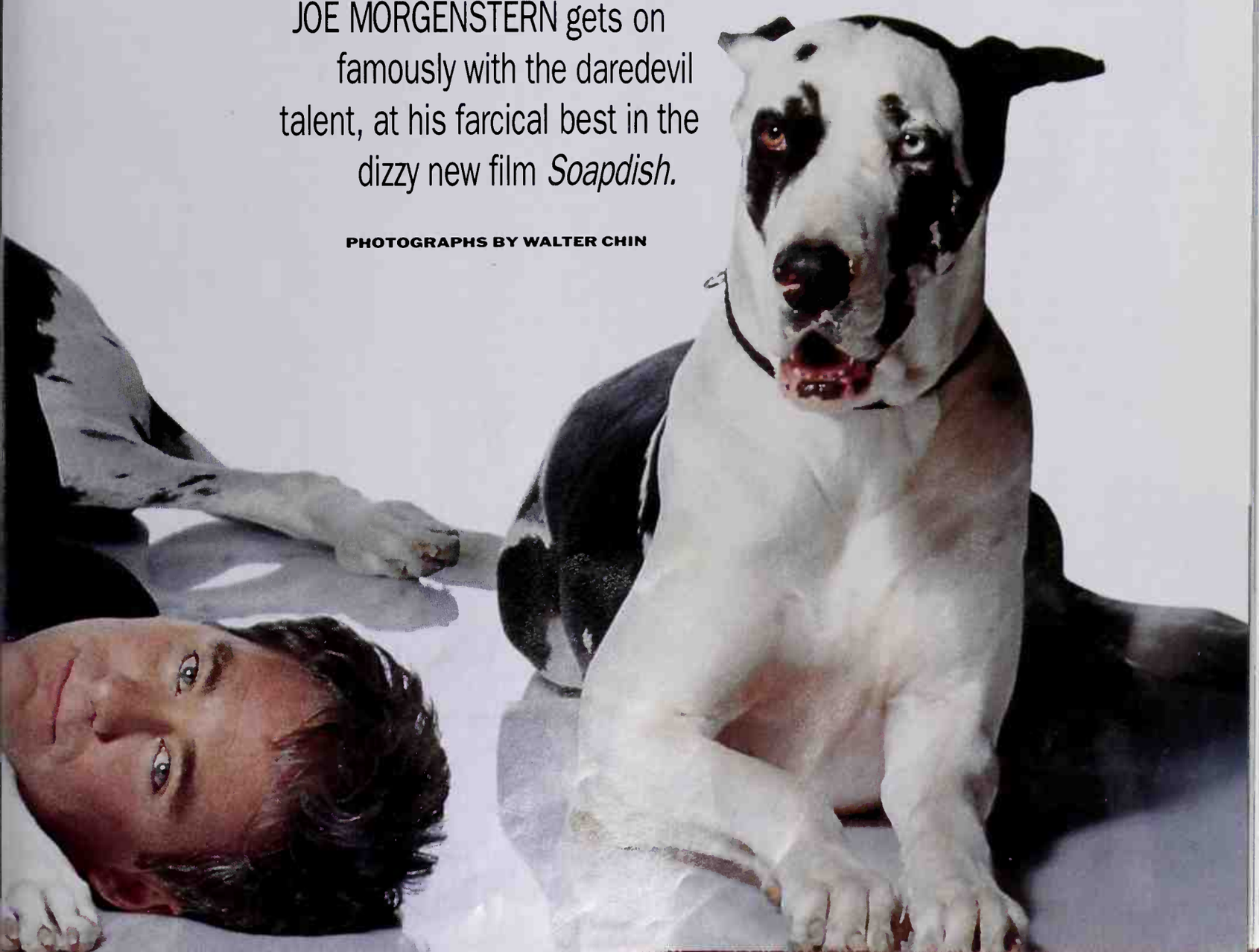
He Loves Hamlet: The sometimes Shakespearean actor with some other Great Danes.

Kevin's choice

They used to say that John Gielgud was the best actor from the neck up, and Olivier from the neck down. Kevin Kline, however, is doing just fine in both directions. A postmodern swashbuckler and the only American actor who you'd ever *want* to see as Hamlet, Kline has struck an enviable balance between stardom and genuine artistic accomplishment in films such as *Sophie's Choice, The Big Chill,* and *A Fish Called Wanda.*

JOE MORGENSTERN gets on famously with the daredevil talent, at his farcical best in the dizzy new film *Soapdish.*

PHOTOGRAPHS BY WALTER CHIN



Kevin Kline

If you subscribe to the generally useful notion of success as a bitch goddess, then Kevin Kline has neither won her nor even wooed her with much devotion. His name doesn't leap to an adoring nation's lips, like that of the other, newly totemic Kevin (that's right, Kevin Schwarzkopf); he can't command the riches heaped on Tom Cruise (who'll command them only so long as his movies keep making heaps). But if you think of success as the blessed state of doing what you love to do superbly well, then Kevin Kline has hit it as big as anyone in Hollywood or anywhere else. He's a star who moves freely between stage and screen, an actor of extraordinary verve and skill, a thinking woman's heartthrob who plays physical comedy with a modern touch.

People often use an old-fashioned term to describe Kline's work. The term is *swashbuckling,* a Hollywood press agent's mainstay in the days when Errol Flynn's cutlass was carving up extras by the score. It's hardly libelous to tag the forty-three-year-old Kline with swashbucklery, given his exuberant presence in *Sophie's Choice* (1982), *The Pirates of Penzance* (1983), and *Soapdish,* the new comedy, co-starring Sally Field, about soap-opera actors on- and offscreen, or his Oscar-winning performance as the hyperkinetic thief Otto in *A Fish Called Wanda* (1988). Still, the term can't convey the complexity of Kline's approach.

When Flynn took on the Spanish armada as a principled pirate in *The Sea Hawk* more than a half-century ago, swordplay was serious business. Flynn's eyes may have flashed on cue, but his smile lost its luster in the heat of battle; as he leaned into one particularly earnest saber stroke in the movie's climax, he looked as if he were trying to dissect a side of beef. By contrast, when Kline played—and sang, winningly—the acclaimed Pirate King in the 1979 New York Shakespeare Festival production of *The Pirates of Penzance,* he went Gilbert and Sullivan's genial parody one better by putting a self-ironic twist on every thrust and parry. His eyes flashed too, but he managed, simultaneously, to savor the silliness of it all with his zestful, iridescent grin. He even cut his finger on his own cutlass.

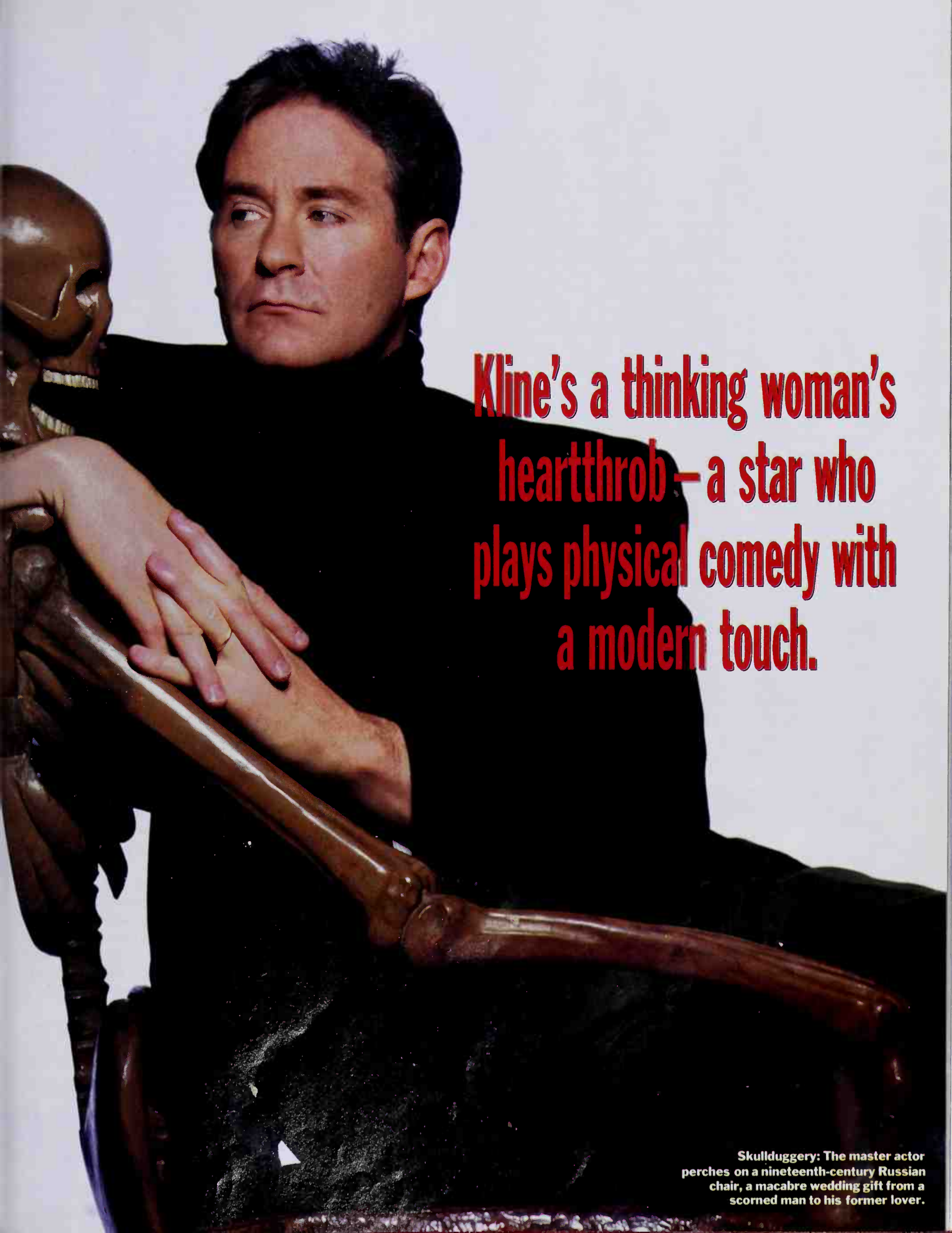
Whether audiences register all of the complexity is open to question. "After I did *Pirates* in Central Park and then on Broadway," Kline tells me in Los Angeles, where he's shooting a new movie for 20th Century Fox called *Grand Canyon,* "some people were saying, 'You should do Robin Hood, you should play these swashbuckling parts because you're one of the few people who can.' And I'd go, 'Great, but I was doing a send-up of all that.' I was like Errol Flynn on acid, just running amok. My Pirate King was completely, indiscriminately passionate about everything. He was romanticized to the point of idiocy. And people would say, 'Yeah, but you were swashbuckling anyway.' " (As it happens, the other Kevin—the one who garnered those Oscars earlier this year for an Indian saga that sometimes parodied itself but didn't know it—plays Robin Hood in a new version that opened in June.)

This is not to suggest that Kevin Kline lacks for appreciative fans or critics. "I've had enough feedback to know that other people are getting that physical stuff the way I intend it. If those who are getting it another way are still having a good time, then fine, I don't want to say, 'No, let me explain, you're laughing for all the wrong reasons.' " Nor does it mean that physical comedy is the be-all and end-all of his career. In 1983, when he played the title role in *Richard III* at the Delacorte Theater in Central Park, Frank Rich of the *New York Times* said, "Kline proves that he could become one of the best classical actors of his generation." When he did *Henry V* in the park two years later, Rich, true to his prediction, wrote: "Next to Mr. Kline, most other American classical actors of his generation are mere pretenders to the throne."

According to an old joke in the English theater, John Gielgud was the best actor in the world from the neck up, and Olivier from the neck down. Kevin Kline is damned fine in both directions, and he explored both in *Sophie's Choice.* As Nathan, Meryl Streep's mad, magnetic lover, he had a lot to live up to; the third character in the piece, a William Styron surrogate named Stingo, describes Nathan as "utterly, fatally glamorous." Yet Kline pulled it off, igniting an otherwise enervated film with his physical grace (cavorting, in the fashion of *Jules and Jim,* at Coney Island, or conducting while the phonograph plays Beethoven); with his touchingly vital reading of tragic lines ("Don't you see, Sophie, we are dying"); and with his richly modulated, musical voice ("Leeks lower the timbre of the voice," Nathan confides to Sophie while preparing a meal).

Sophie's Choice was the first of Kline's movies to be released, though it was the second movie he made, following a modestly produced but still engaging screen version of *The Pirates of Penzance.* Actually, *Pirates* helped win him his part in *Sophie,* which was directed by Alan J. Pakula: "What Alan saw on Broadway in that crazy Pirate King was something he wanted for Nathan." Kline also drew some of Nathan's allure from a Broadway musical-comedy role he'd played a year before *Pirates:* Bruce Granit, the fatuous third-rate movie idol in Cy Coleman's *On the Twentieth Century.*

"Do you know *Twentieth Century,* the Howard Hawks movie? It's John Barrymore's greatest performance. In the musical, they made his part into a kind of terrible actor with slicked-back hair who's hitching a ride on the train and on



Kline's a thinking woman's heartthrob – a star who plays physical comedy with a modern touch.

Skullduggery: The master actor perches on a nineteenth-century Russian chair, a macabre wedding gift from a scorned man to his former lover.

Kevin Kline

an actress's career. The potential to make it outrageous was built in, and the part just grew, in rehearsals, into this kind of monster."

Having played Bruce Granit to a fare-thee-well—the role won him a Drama Desk Award and the first of two Tony Awards—Kline had misgivings about doing *Soapdish,* in which he plays another awful actor, the unquenchable Jeffrey Anderson. (Not only does Jeffrey play *Death of a Salesman* in a dinner theater in Miami, but he dreams of doing a one-man *Hamlet*.) But the part proved impossible to resist for a performer who loves acting and actors, a subculture that the grandees of earlier generations used to call, with thinly veiled contempt, "theatricals."

That love was plain to see one afternoon this spring on the Paramount lot, where Kline was doing some last-minute looping on *Soapdish*. In the looping process, which comes after a movie has been shot, an actor, wearing headphones, watches himself on a screen and re-records, in synch with his own lips, snippets of dialogue that may have been slightly flat or skewed in the original performance or obscured by mechanical noise. It's a routine, often tedious part of movie-making, but Kline threw himself into it with professional pleasure that verged on boyish delight.

The best moments came when he turned to the task of cleaning up Jeffrey's act for a TV version of the movie. For each raunchy phrase or off-color word, he had to find a bland replacement that would fit in his character's mouth and make reasonable sense in the bargain. Thus the line "Of course I'm full of shit, but not about that!" became "Of course I'm fooling myself, but not about that!"; and "You try playing Willy Loman in front of a bunch of old farts eating meat loaf!" became ". . . in front of a bunch of old twits!"

This confrontation between life-size performer and movie-size character illustrated the transforming power of Kevin Kline's art. At the microphone stood a mild-mannered man, dressed in self-effacing black; tall but not towering at six foot two, well built but not overwhelming, and handsome in an open, congenial way. On the screen swooped a wild-mannered man who may have been a fool, but an enormous fool, a dashing fool who jumped, spun, lunged, and whirled with Kline's customarily lyrical, mercurial panache. Shadow and substance, fantasy and essence, though you couldn't always be certain which was which.

KEVIN KLINE GREW UP IN ST. LOUIS, THE SON OF A Jewish father and a Catholic mother, and attended the St. Louis Priory, a Catholic boys' school run by Benedictine monks from England. He came to the theater by way of music; his father, a passionate opera lover, opened a record store that later became a record and toy store. Kline says of his father, "His knowledge of music was, and is, tremendous. Kids would always come in wanting rock and roll, and he would try to talk them out of it and into classical music, to no avail for the most part. I still meet people who say, 'Oh, I used to hang out at your father's store and he was always singing opera to us.' "

After studying piano composing and conducting for two years at Indiana University's School of Music, Kline switched to the theater department, then moved to New York for graduate work at the Juilliard School of Drama. One of his teachers at Juilliard, the actress Marian Seldes, was struck by his "grace, his charm, and his beautiful manners" from the start. "I saw the human being before I saw the actor," recalls Seldes, who also played mad Margaret opposite Kline's Richard III, "and found his lovely buoyancy, along with an immediate attention to the person he was talking to. I mention all this because I think, in Kevin's development from young actor to major actor, the spine of his human behavior has not changed, while his acting has deepened and grown beyond my dreams. And they were pretty extensive dreams."

At Juilliard, Kline and his classmates were drafted by the late John Houseman to become the founding ensemble of the Acting Company, a group whose unexceptional, vaguely corporate name belied its utopian, blithely anachronistic purpose: bringing the finest flower of world theater, both modern and classical, to the American provinces of the late twentieth century. "We were so fortunate, and we knew it," Kline says. "It was a version of the English repertory system where you finish school, then you go out to Birmingham or Liverpool or wherever to practice what you've learned, and you do great plays, in every different shape and size of theater imaginable, for every different sort of audience.

"Now, granted, we were living in a bus, and after a couple of years on the road we started going, 'Um, are we really saving the theater like Houseman told us?' But we were certainly doing great plays, the idea being that if you play the great parts, you will grow as an actor, and you'll never be a great actor if you play lousy parts. We played in forty states by the end of my four-year term. I have friends who stayed on to play all fifty states, plus Australia, and they're still going strong."

During all those years and beyond, Kline was a bachelor—not just any bachelor but one of the preeminent bachelors of his profession. As Seldes puts it, "Everyone in the theater fell in love with him." In 1979, in New York, Kline met the actress Phoebe Cates. Along with a number of other New York actors, they'd been invited by the director and co-writer Lawrence Kasdan to a reading of a new script called *The Big Chill*. Cates read the part that Meg Tilly eventually played, while Kevin Kline read, and later played, the part of the sane, centered manufacturer of running shoes.

"I thought Phoebe was really beautiful, but she had a boyfriend—I don't remember anymore who it was—and that seemed too bad. Then I met her again when she was rehearsing *The Nest of the Wood Grouse* and I was rehearsing *Henry V*—we used to bump into each other in the hallways of the Public Theater. This time she didn't have the boyfriend, and she was even more beautiful." Two years ago they married and are expecting their first child in the fall.

According to some New York scene watchers, Kline's social life has centered on a group, including William Hurt and Robin Williams, that used to hang out at the Chelsea Central, where Bruce Willis was once *(Continued on page 89)*

Coming to orgasm with Jamie Lee Curtis, Kline's Os

ing Otto looked like a blissed-out Moe Howard.

PALACE COUP

When the "last queen of Genoa" died in 1989, she left behind the Palazzo Durazzo Pallavicini and a legacy that marks one of the world's grandest private homes. At last, her heirs have opened the palace doors to GABRIELLA DE FERRARI for an exclusive tour of treasures rivaled only by those of the queen of England.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MASSIMO LISTRI

Reign Day: Marchesa Carlotta Cattaneo Adorno entertains Elizabeth II, who stunned Genoa with her visit to the Palazzo Durazzo Pallavicini in 1980.

A commanding trompe l'oeil fireplace anchors the Salone di Achille, named for the room's Achilles paintings, which were commissioned in the eighteenth century by one of the dynasty's most ambitious collectors, Giacomo Filippo II. The Filippo Parodi (1630–1702) candelabrum to the doorway's right is one of the palazzo's preeminent works of sculpture.

The airy Marble Gallery on the main floor showcases two Parodi candelabra, *left.*

In 1980 the queen of England visited the Palazzo Durazzo Pallavicini in Genoa to take tea with her friend, the marchesa Carlotta Cattaneo Adorno. The visit marked a climactic chapter in the marchesa's life, validating anew the significance of the all-too-mysterious Palazzo Durazzo Pallavicini, a house with such a distinguished collection of art that it might be compared in quality with the queen's itself. The marchesa was able to show Elizabeth II the refurbished palazzo that had become the singular passion of her later years. So proud was Carlotta that in a gesture eschewing traditional Genovese reticence, she allowed local press coverage of the royal call. For the average Genovese, who had noted the austere and graying exterior of the modified neoclassical building merely in passing, the stellar event proved to be a revelation.

Genoa is a dense, busy community pressed by the steep hills of the Ligurian coast on three sides and the Mediterranean Sea on the fourth. The maritime city-state's importance has risen and fallen with the political currents since the fifth century B.C. Today it is a center for passenger and freight traffic. For those blessed with business acumen—including generations of Palazzo Durazzo Pallavicini residents—Genoa's location afforded lucrative trading opportunities.

The couple that now reign over the palazzo are new to their task as guardians of one of the great Italian households. Today's marchesa is a diminutive woman with blond hair, blue eyes, and fair skin that echo her English ancestry. Her husband, the marchese, is tall, elegant, and aristocratic, scion of one of Italy's great noble families. In Genovese style, their ages—she appears to be in her midthirties, he in his early forties—aren't a topic of conversation. They met in Brazil, and, with a knowing smile, the marchese acknowledges, "It is almost accidental that we are here. We are lucky." Lucky, indeed, to have been the eldest son of a woman the local press declared "the last queen of Genoa" when she died in 1989.

In residence for barely two years, the marchese Marcello and marchesa Sandra Cattaneo Adorno appear completely at ease, surrounded by what has been called "the most extraordinary art collection in all Italy still surviving in a lived-in home." Displayed against family heirlooms are 200 paintings—a staggering assemblage of masterworks by such artists as Titian, Van Dyck, Brueghel, Rubens, Veronese, Reni, and the Genovese masters Castiglione and De Ferrari. What sets this apart from other collections such as those of the Roman Doria and Colonna families is that these homes have been modified to accommodate traditional galleries. Not so this palazzo, where the family reads with its Van Dycks and Titians, dines amidst its Rubenses and Renis, answers letters beneath a Domenichino, and holds charity balls in the shadow of gold-leaf Filippo Parodi candelabra, among the house's few significant pieces of sculpture. As a local cultural leader has said, "It is an amazing package inside amazing packaging."

Observers also marvel at the Durazzo–Cattaneo Adorno family itself, which has escaped the sorts of scandals and infighting that nettle families bearing names synonymous with priceless art inventories. It helped that this dynasty never grew too big to handle. The clan suffered an uncommon number of childless marriages and early deaths. So wealth accumulated and passed to a few heirs. The occasional rumor—perfunctory babble about family disagreements over how its money is spent—might whisper its way down one of the city's ancient streets, the same place where it usually sputters and dies.

More than 300 years old, the Palazzo Durazzo Pallavicini rises five stories above Genoa's Via Balbi.

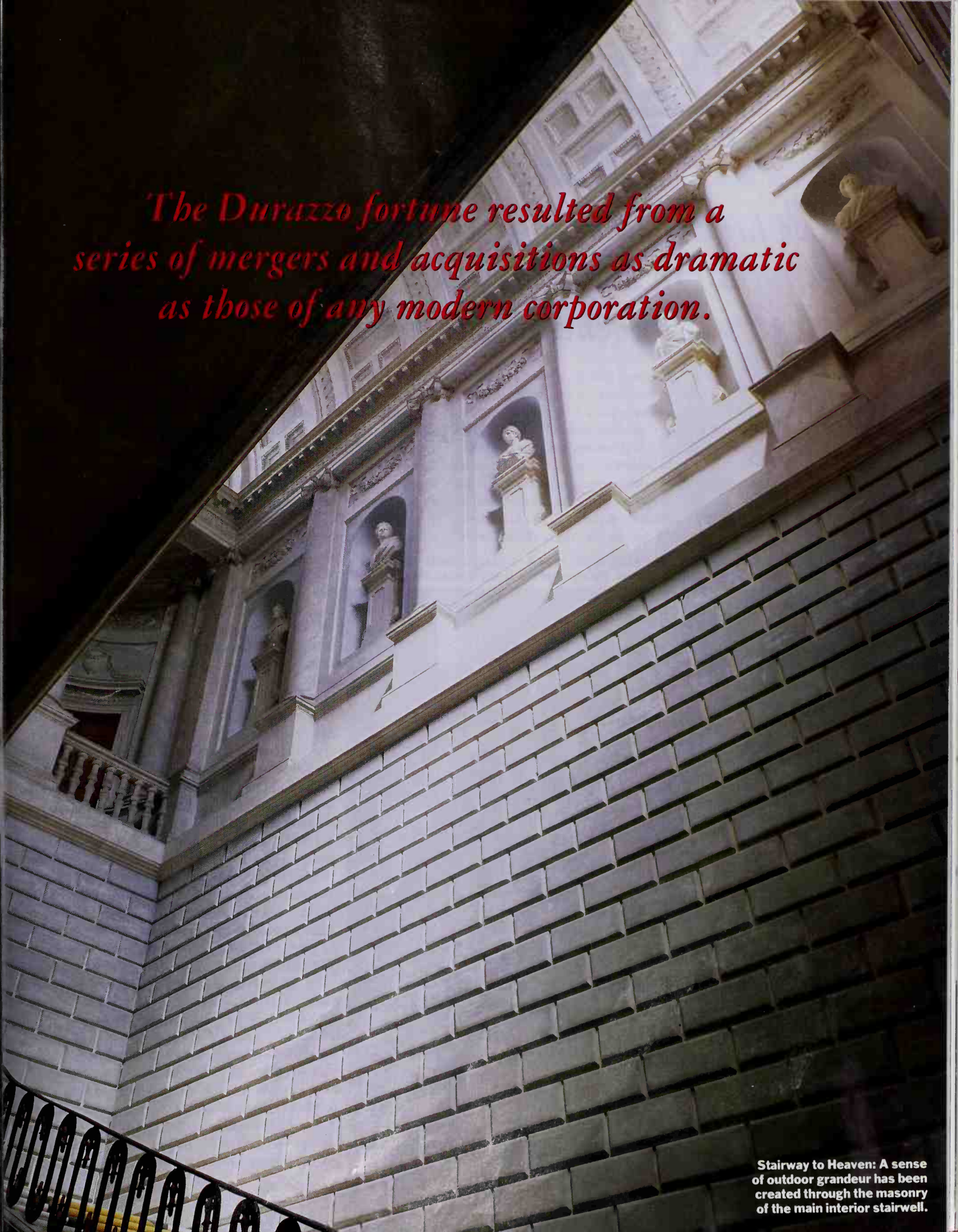
The fortune in the Cattaneo Adorno hands resulted from a series of mergers and acquisitions as dramatic and in some ways as deliberate as those of a modern corporation. Early records trace the Durazzo Pallavicini family back to 1389, when Giorgio di Durazzo, from the town of Durazzo in Albania, fled the devastation of a war with Turkey and settled in Genoa. Over the course of generations, the family flourished, accruing property, money, and social status. By the seventeenth century, overseas trading had become part of the Durazzo empire.

In the seventeenth century, as the family expanded, two farsighted Durazzo brothers proposed a more deliberate approach to both finances and marriages to strengthen the clan's political and historical clout. The duo began to gather and organize family documents, collecting those in relatives' hands and retrieving others from outside archives. And one of the brothers, Giacomo Filippo II, initiated the family's greatest surge in artistic acquisitions. With the painter Paolo Gerolamo Piola acting as his adviser, he traveled to Bologna and Florence, where he acquired paintings by Reni and Veronese. From Madrid he purchased a Rubens and a Titian.

Displayed against family heirlooms is a staggering assemblage of 200 paintings by Titian, Brueghel, Veronese, and others.

WHEN CANCER CLAIMED CARLOTTA IN 1989, MARCELLO and Sandra inherited her property. This heritage followed from the *Primogenitura,* once a law of the nobility and now

The Durazzo fortune resulted from a series of mergers and acquisitions as dramatic as those of any modern corporation.



Stairway to Heaven: A sense of outdoor grandeur has been created through the masonry of the main interior stairwell.

merely a tradition that calls for the family home and the bulk of the fortune to pass to the oldest son. But the marchese knows the fates that delivered his windfall traveled a fickle path. It began with the death of Giacomo Durazzo Pallavicini in the early 1900s. Because he died childless, his wife, Matilde Giustiniani, became his sole heir. Although Matilde's second marriage, too, produced no children, it left her with the vast Sauli and Negrotto Cambiaso fortunes of her second husband. To ensure the continuation of the line, she began a search for an heir within her own extended family. When she found a suitable candidate in Carlotta Giustiniani, her cousin's young daughter, she promptly adopted her. Carlotta was a charming, well-educated girl from an eminently respectable branch of Matilde's family tree—Carlotta's father was a diplomat. The industrious marchesa not only schooled Carlotta in the responsibilities of the Durazzo Pallavicini legacy but also introduced the young woman to her future husband, an aristocratic and handsome journalist named Maurizio Cattaneo Adorno.

The family reads with its Van Dycks, dines amidst its Rubenses and Renis, and answers letters beneath a Domenichino.

Like so many Genovese bewitched by what lies beyond the sea, Carlotta and her new husband left for adventures in Brazil, a popular opiate for Italian wanderlust. The adventure seekers were not disappointed. Cattaneo Adorno abandoned journalism and built an empire from such prosaic enterprises as insulation and meat packing. The couple often traveled, returning to Europe to visit relatives and monitor the family's vast real-estate holdings. When at home, Carlotta led a quiet life, devoting much of her time to raising her two sons, Marcello and Giacomo.

The family's unalloyed comfort rudely ended in 1964 in Brazil. An inveterate sailor, Cattaneo Adorno was killed in a boating accident. In the ensuing confusion, Carlotta was compelled to take a prominent role in her late husband's business affairs, becoming an effective manager in a country where women rarely worked outside the home. Brazil, in the throes of military rule, was reeling from political and economic turmoil. As Carlotta would later concede, "It was the year of the Brazilian revolution, and we were in danger of losing everything. The work had to go on." Six years later, when her aunt Matilde died, Carlotta charged her sons with the management of the Brazilian business and the Italian properties. She returned to Genoa to assume the role for which she'd been groomed.

Six paintings by Giuseppe Baccigaluppo (1744—1821) decorate this intimate *salotto* named after the artist. It serves as the family's private dining room.

More than Carlotta's home, the Palazzo Durazzo Pallavicini became a third and demanding child. Her station in Genovese society allowed Carlotta to pursue her philanthropic interests—particularly cancer research and art conservation. She generously made the palazzo available to scholars and for charitable events.

Her true passion, though, was the meticulous restoration and care of the rambling palazzo, originally commissioned in 1618 by Genoa's wealthy Balbi family and designed by Bartolomeo Bianco. Although this home had been treasured by the many generations of Durazzos who'd lived there, it was worn and disorganized: paint peeled from otherwise ageless cupids, oil paintings were coated with centuries of grime, and piles of rare manuscripts gathered dust. Perhaps most disquieting was the discovery that this colossal, awesome collection had never been properly inventoried. Carlotta, who had studied archaeology as a young student, took on the tasks before her with dogged professionalism. The palazzo's rich silk and damask drapes, for example, had been handmade in a Zoagli factory twenty miles down the coast,

bedroom of Matilde Giustiniani, the palazzo's ch during the early twentieth century, reflects eligious fervor with a Madonna, believed to be Raphael school, and a crucifix above her bed.

and Carlotta realized the factory might be history when the draperies needed to be replaced. She commissioned it to make a complete replacement, which she stored in the meantime.

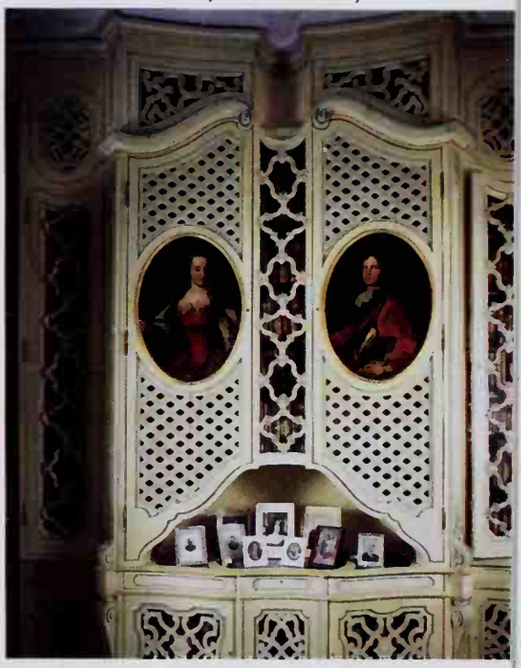
Although she surrounded herself with scholars, some of whom helped her with a book on the palace that she never completed, the tireless marchesa found time for others who shared her artistic sensibilities. Susan Barnes, now the senior curator of Western art at the Dallas Museum of Art, first met with Carlotta while writing her dissertation. "I had no position," Barnes recalls. "I was a student. She was a great lady of great curiosity." Barnes stayed in touch with the marchesa and later met with her while preparing the Van Dyck exhibition that closed earlier this year at the National Gallery in Washington, D.C. Although the Durazzo Pallavicini's Van Dycks were not part of the show—family decree dictates that none of its artwork be lent outside Genoa—the marchesa made her collection available for study.

To reach the palazzo for the first look granted to any publication by its new owners, one must navigate Genoa's relentlessly congested streets. The Via Balbi, where the palazzo stands, was built in the tradition of the great Genovese thoroughfares by the wealthy Balbi family in the early 1600s. Then it served as a conduit that cut through their vast land holdings. What is now the Palazzo Durazzo Pallavicini was one of the first palaces to be built on the street. It was commissioned by Giovanni Agostino Balbi. Its designer, the thirty-year-old Bartolomeo Bianco, would become the most important Genovese architect of his time. His showpiece, the courtyard and stairwell of the Palazzo dell'Università, is also located on Via Balbi. Soon the entire street was lined with the style of palazzi that gave Genoa the nickname of La Superba. In 1709 the Balbi family sold their palazzo to the Durazzo family.

One Via Balbi, or Number One, as longtime Genovese call it, sweeps down 189 feet of the rather narrow avenue and rises five stories above it. The building's foundation is elevated above street level, and so the eleven enormous windows that adorn the piano nobile, or main floor, are raised high over a comfortable sight line. The viewer must assume a stance of dwarfed awe—head tilted back—to view them. The architecture is otherwise restrained and largely unembellished. Despite its grandiose size, the palazzo, its facade unrestored and gray with soot, attracts scant notice—which has always been the Durazzo family's intention. Its subtle charm, though, has not been lost on generations of artists: Rubens mentions it in his book *Palazzi di Genova,* and Van Dyck used it as the background in a number of paintings.

The doorman's greeting is relaxed and informal. Today's guest is led up a short flight of stairs toward a central courtyard. The marchesa Sandra, following just behind, wears a perfectly appointed gray dress accented by a few pieces of elegant jewelry—simple gold earrings and a superbly crafted wedding band encrusted with stones.

Accessible and energetic, her face animated by delicate and well-defined features, she steps quickly. Chatting warmly, she ushers her guest into the palazzo. The courtyard is stately, almost severe. But, Sandra explains, "Soon it will be time for the annual spring ritual of bringing back its potted palms." The perimeter has columns that support a handsome vaulted ceiling. Beneath are the broad black-and-white checkered tiles typical of Genoa, and of the palazzo. An imposing double staircase, added in the 1770s, leads up to the piano nobile, which comprises the public spaces of all great Italian homes. The palazzo's dozens of rooms include the family quarters upstairs. Sandra leads the way to a surprisingly modern addition—a tiny elevator that zooms to an understatedly elegant main-floor hallway.



Family photographs bedeck a Gallerietta di Soggiorno bookcase with Domenico Parodi's *Ritratto di Dama,* left door, and *Ritratto di Gentiluomo,* by Giovanni Maria delle Piane (1660–1745), right.

In perfect Italian layered with a faint Portuguese accent, the marchesa directs her guest to the Salotto Rosso, or Red Room, where coffee is served. Although born in Brazil of English parents, she was educated abroad, in the manner of most well-to-do South American girls. She graduated from finishing school in London and then went on to attend the University of Southern California in Los Angeles.

As she speaks, Sandra is distracted by the sight of a small fire screen nearby. "We're having a reception for five hundred people next week," she relates. "I must have that fire screen restored before then." That sort of attention to detail is at the heart of her mother-in-law's legacy. Sandra dismisses a remark about her own meticulousness, deflecting the compliment by telling how Carlotta once took her to China to have some silk reproduced according to the original cartoons. Making a note on a large pad she carries, Sandra says softly, "I must find those cartoons. I wonder where they are."

Such fastidiousness has its rewards. Here, where many of the furnishings were acquired almost 300 years ago, everything looks fresh and well cared for. Hermetically sealed windows keep out the city's soot and much of its noise. Cornices and frames are perfectly gilded. Paintings are newly cleaned. Furniture glows with a soft sheen—you'll find no

Above: **This soulful *Maddalena*, by Titian (1477–1576), in the Sala della Maddalena resembles other works by the artist using the same subject, including one in the Hermitage.**

Left: **The poignant *Apparizione di Cristo Risorto alla Madre*, by Domenichino (1581–1641), crowns the doorway of the Salone del Van Dyck.**

overvarnished surfaces in these gracious rooms.

Later, as the tour unfolds, a first impression of the palazzo will be confirmed: even before focusing on individual artworks, the eye is held captive by the rooms themselves. They were created as deliberately as the paintings were chosen—a perfect balance of composition, form, color, and texture. Though relatively undistinguished, the furniture, a broad mix of rococo and neoclassical styles, does not detract from the home's real treasures. The same is true of the sculpture, which features a mix of busts, nymphs, saints, and cast-into-hell sinners.

The mammoth *Muzio Scevola*, by Guercino (1591–1666), dominates the *salotto* bearing its name. Marcantonio Franceschini's (1648–1729) *Betsabea al Bagno*, bottom right, also graces the sitting nook.

The Salotto Rosso, about twenty-six feet by twenty-six feet, a room of moderate size, takes its name from the lush red fabric that underlies the paintings on the walls and is repeated in the patterns on the rugs and furniture. Although most of the objects here are heirlooms, modern silver-framed family photographs suggest the warmth that comes only from a lived-in space. This room alone holds a compilation of masterworks that would be the envy of any major museum. One looks about in awe at Van Dyck's *Portrait of a Young Man* (believed to be a self-portrait from his days in Genoa), a portrait by Rubens of Genovese nobleman Ambrogio Spinola, yet another Van Dyck, of women weeping over the fallen Christ, and Andrea del Sarto's *The Journey of the Magi*.

From this room, one can glimpse the Galleria Celeste, or Blue Gallery, which was used as Carlotta's office. The cozy space, with its dainty seventeenth-century furniture, exudes a quiet dignity. Soft blue tones recur to harmonize otherwise lively elements and provide a handsome backdrop for works by Domenichino, Annibale and Ludovico Carracci, and the Genovese Castiglione.

On the way to lunch, a walk through the Salotto Verde, or Green Room, the same size as the Salotto Rosso, yields a startling find: a Flemish master painting, Brueghel's *Offerta a Cibele*—a celebration of spring redolent with vibrantly colored flowers. As with so many of the other rooms, the floor has been covered in one of the many vast Persian carpets amassed over generations of exotic global travels. Yet the original parquet below is now and again visible.

MARCHESE MARCELLO ARRIVES FOR THE MEAL

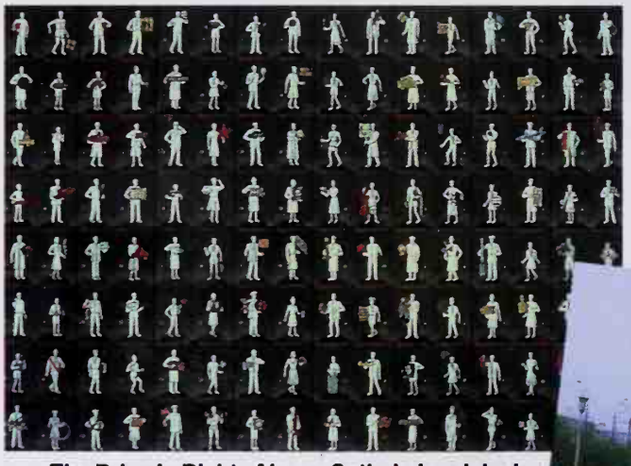
(Continued on page 91)

The grand Salone del Van Dyck is home to *Democrito*, left, foreground, from the seventeenth-century school of Ribera; *I Tre Fanciulli*, by Van Dyck (1599–1631), far wall, top left; Van Dyck's *Il Fanciullo Bianco*, bottom right; and Domenichino's *Morte di Adone*, bottom left.

MISSION TO MOSCOW

Before perestroika, all anyone knew about Soviet art was that if it wasn't government-sanctioned, it didn't exist. And then a massively publicized Sotheby's auction revealed a school of painters—some brilliant, others not—who for a moment commanded the world's attention and more than a few rubles for their work.

ANDREW SOLOMON, in an adaptation of his forthcoming book The Irony Tower, *explains how the East was won and whether the hype was worth it.*



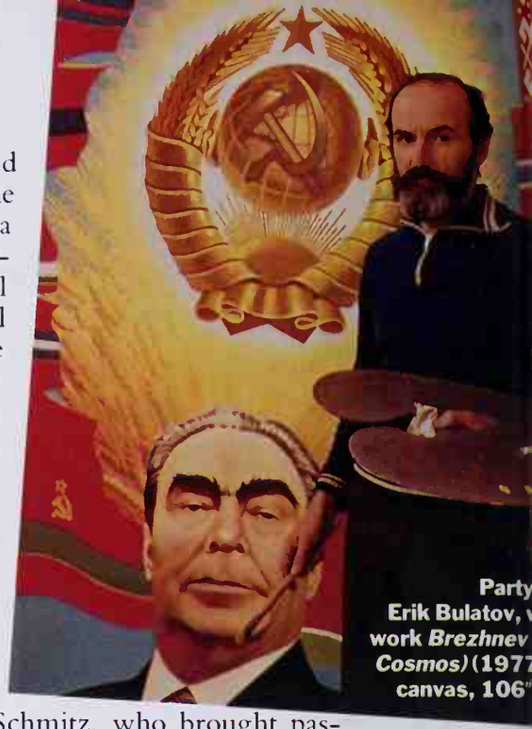
The Price Is Right: *Above,* Sotheby's original estimate for Grisha Bruskin's *Fundamental Lexicon* (1986, oil on thirty-two canvases, 21′ 5⁄8″ x 14′ 7⁄8″ overall) was $24,000 to $32,000. It sold for $415,700. *Right,* Sotheby's Simon de Pury with Baron Thyssen-Bornemisza and his wife, Carmen, in Moscow.

Auctionmania: Simon de Pury, managing director of Sotheby's European operations, conducting the sale of contemporary Soviet art on July 7, 1988, with Sotheby's chairman, the Earl of Gowrie, to his right.

ON THE NIGHT OF JULY 7, 1988, AT THE OSTENSIBLY luxurious Mezhdunarodnaya Hotel in Moscow, Sotheby's staged an auction of Soviet contemporary art that rivaled the Andy Warhol auction in New York for its infamous business smarts and unbridled hype. It was in fact so heralded an event that in the years that followed, critics, curators, collectors, and artists variously credited the auction house with discovering a movement, inventing a movement, and destroying a movement. To some extent, all of them were right: Sotheby's had indeed discovered a brilliant group of artists but had at the same time misleadingly presented them as a movement (simply by putting them all together in one catalog); and the mercantilism it brought to a hitherto noncommercial world, though it opened up grand prospects, might have had damaging effects on the very thing it was trying to promote—the work itself.

Sotheby's is, after all, a public company, so it had reasons other than an interest in the artists' futures for staging the sale: it was an opportunity to establish good relations with the Soviet government at the dawn of perestroika, with the possibility of monopoly contracts and other boons down the line. It now seems clear that contemporary art and artists were initially seen as a convenience—a means to an end, perhaps—and Sotheby's plied that fact on a scale that may have alienated many important critics and collectors. The hype paid off: while the sale included some real dross, there was a bountiful supply of spectacularly good art, and it sold like T-bone steaks in a state-run shop. The trouble was that no one knew enough about contemporary Soviet art at that point to tell which was which. It was merely serendipity that some of the works merited the publicity.

Soviet art had actually been discovered incrementally during the decade preceding the Sotheby's sale, when a few Soviet artists started to get exposure in the capitals of Western Europe and in New York, but the big players in the art game didn't pay much attention. There were three lesser players, however, who had been operating behind the scenes for quite some time, slowly building up interest to the level that had been reached at the sale. The first was a European executive, whom for legal reasons we shall call Fritz Horne. The second was a wealthy Swiss diplomat, Paul Jolles, who, with his daughter Claudia, wanted the glory of discovery, although they gave authority and dignity to the search. The third was a Berlin artist, Lisa Schmitz, who brought passion and high idealism to the communication between the Moscow vanguard and the West. After they had laid the groundwork, Sotheby's followed, bringing in fame, glamour, and worldwide attention, legitimizing a once sub-rosa artistic community. The artists themselves at first remained aloof, but on the night of the Sotheby's sale in Moscow they abruptly entered into an ambivalent relationship with celebrity and fortune that was to undermine their whole system of values.



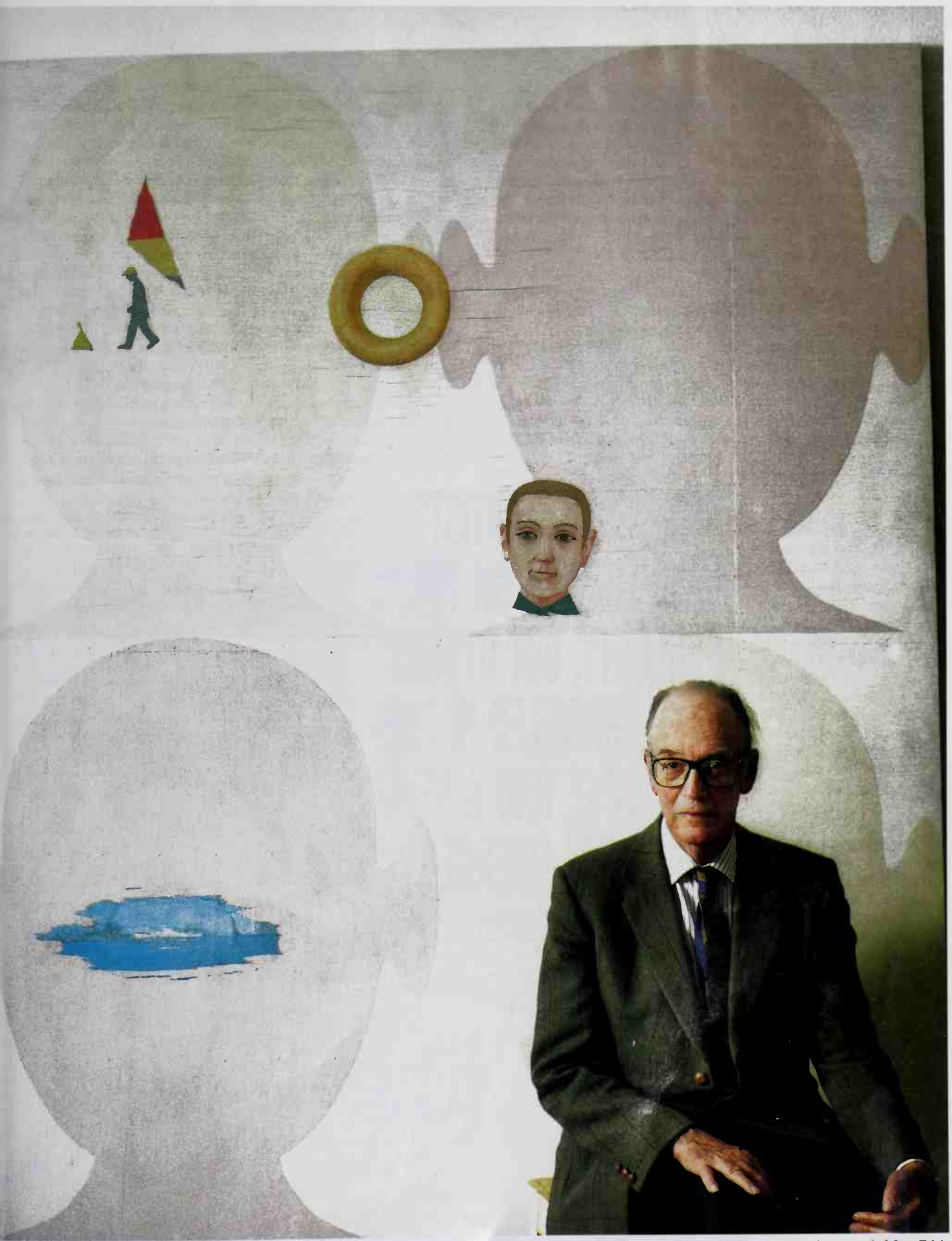
Party
Erik Bulatov, v
work *Brezhnev*
Cosmos) (197
canvas, 106"

Above, **German conceptual artist Lisa Schmitz in her Berlin studio.**

Below, **Claudia Jolles, who with her father mounted the first important exhibition of Soviet art in the West, in 1986, two years before the Sotheby's sale.**

MANY OF THE ARTISTS UTTER THE NAME OF FRITZ HORNE like that of an evil spirit. Horne went to the USSR in the early eighties and there met various artists whose work he promised to sell in the West. He swaggered up to their small, rat-infested studios, announcing that he would place their work in the major museums of the world—the Whitney, the Met, MoMA, the Pompidou—and then fled with the goods without ensuring proper payment. He may well have hoped that he could bring it off, and he certainly must be credited with recognizing some good artists. The work he sought out was the best—including that of Ilya Kabakov, Erik Bulatov, and the Furmanny artists, a group of seven conceptualists who were leaders of the avant-garde—much of it better than what Sotheby's would offer with so much pomp and circumstance a few years later. But Horne didn't have the connections or the cash needed to realize his plans.

"He was so charming," a woman who worked for him says. "He said he would place the work in the best collections, that he would pay the artists in hard currency. Then he took the paintings, and they disappeared. No one got any money." Of course, at that point the export of "unofficial" work was illegal—only someone who had the savvy to bribe border guards, pay off officials, compliment where compliments were needed, and leave discreetly when it was discreet to leave could get work shipped out of the Soviet Union. Horne managed to negotiate export and between 1985 and 1987 regularly took paintings to the West, where they all but "vanished," a few having perhaps been sold to private collectors. No one entire-



Swiss minister for foreign economic affairs Paul Jolles, with Ilya Kabakov's *Die Kringel* (1970, enamel on wood, 92″ x 74″).

ly honest could have done it. "It was so stupid of us not to see that he couldn't be a decent man," one Moscow artist says.

Horne's betrayal was an especially unfortunate introduction to the Western art world for artists such as Sergey Volkov, Kostya Zvezdochetov, and Sven Gundlakh—whose work was all about trust and secrets and coded forms of communication. Designed to be meaningless, even boring, to the eyes of the KGB, this work was constructed in terms so secretive that, paradoxically, it remained incomprehensible to the West long after it became famous.

Through decades of oppression, during which avant-garde art could not be exhibited in public, artists hung their work on their walls and invited their friends and acquaintances and the friends of friends to come and look at it. They were, in their own words, "like the early Christians, or like Freemasons." They could recognize one another almost at a glance, believing that they knew a higher truth than was vouchsafed to the rest of the Soviet people. From their circumstances of difficulty they learned the integrity that is the true subject of their work. Their world of mutuality was shot through with intense ironies and petty conflicts, of course, but it still gave urgency and secret meaning to existence in a country where for many all gesture seemed futile.

SOME SOVIET ARTISTS HAVE THRIVED ON THE PUBLICITY, BUT OTHERS HAVE SHRIVELED IN THE FACE OF IT, AND A NEW ORDER HAS EMERGED.

Since the fifty or sixty people who made up the avant-garde were at the same time the creators of Soviet art and its audience, the artists' strong personalities were a key to what they created. They are not only painters or sculptors but also (because their work is grounded in riddles) poets and actors. This curious amalgam makes them irresistible, implacable, and, ultimately, impenetrable. In the power of their expression and their belief in what they have to say lies their genius. Bit by bit, since the West discovered them, they have learned to communicate in more public terms, but it has been a slow and painful process. Some have thrived on publicity, but others have shriveled in the face of it, and a new order has begun to emerge. The Sotheby's sale was the first night of that new order.

HORNE HIT THE SOVIET ARTISTS WHERE THEY WERE MOST susceptible; his presence in Moscow was a further step in the system of oppression they had always known. On the other hand, Paul Jolles and his daughter Claudia, both of whom became seriously involved with Soviet art in the mid-eighties, at the height of the Horne depredations, are decent, honorable, and very serious. Paul Jolles, the Swiss minister for foreign economic affairs and chairman of Nestlé, has been a connoisseur of and advocate for underrepresented art; Claudia, his thirty-something daughter, a serious scholar of art, was deeply committed to the work her father had begun.

Their involvement with Soviet art began in the mid-seventies when they went to see an exhibition in Zurich of a handful of drawings by Ilya Kabakov, Erik Bulatov, Vladimir Yankilevskiy, and a few other artists of the older generation of the Moscow vanguard. Though it went largely unnoticed by others, it fascinated Jolles, who while on a trip to Moscow asked the Swiss embassy staff to locate the artists he had seen in the Zurich show. In Kabakov's studio, he says, he was "warmly received. Kabakov immediately took me to meet the other artists. They were not remotely competitive; they all wanted to introduce me to one another, and I bought some small works, drawings mostly, from the people I met." Though Jolles was impressed with the artists, he bought their work almost as souvenirs. The following week Kabakov was called in by the KGB for entertaining a stranger. "I didn't invite him, and I didn't solicit his visit," Kabakov told the KGB officials at the time. "What should I have done when I saw him standing at my door? Refused him a cup of tea?"

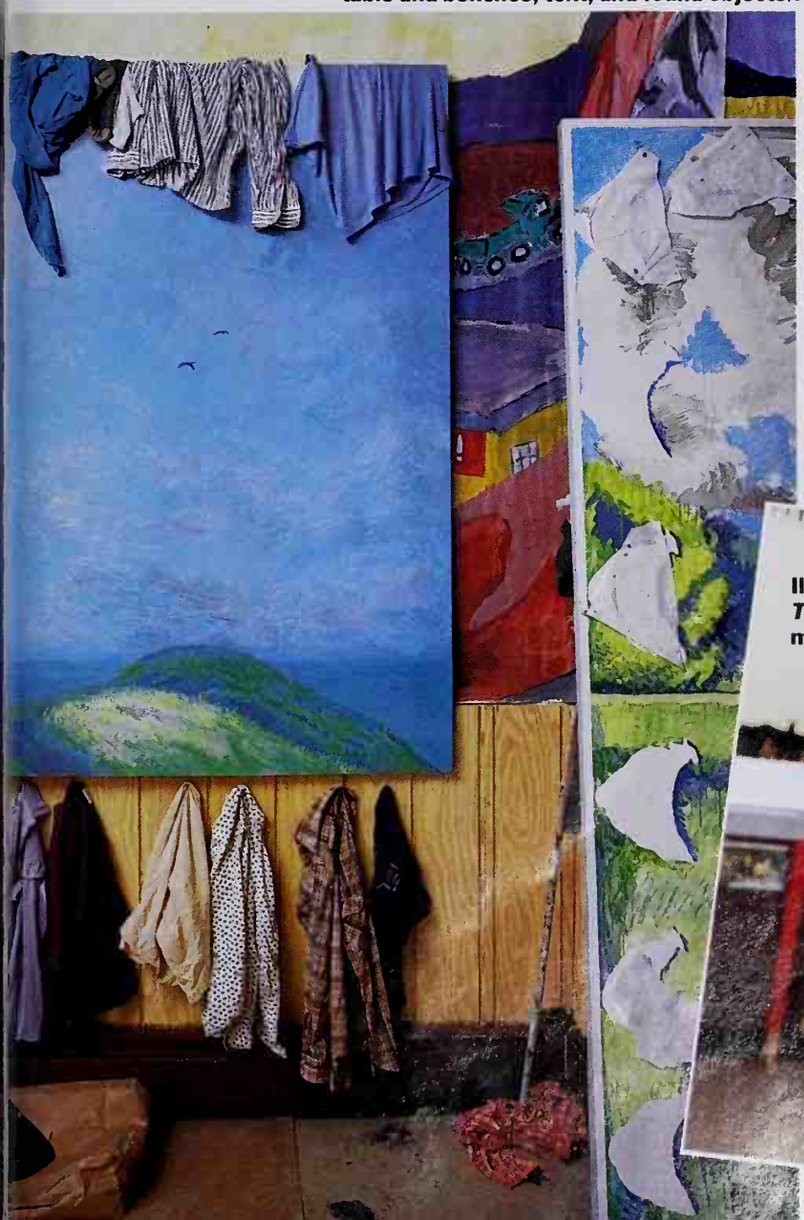
Ten years passed before Claudia Jolles visited the USSR in 1984 with her university class. Looking for diversion, she and her friends called on Kabakov and Bulatov. Later that year Paul Jolles, again in Moscow on government business, visited the artists and took photos of their work, which he showed to Jean-Hubert Martin, then director of the Kunsthalle in Berne and now of the Pompidou. Martin expressed great enthusiasm at the prospect of a Kabakov show. But there was no possibility of getting official Soviet approbation or export permits, and obviously—since Paul Jolles had an important government post—the idea of quietly transferring the art out of the country was out of the question. Instead, Jolles applied for official permission to take out individual paintings and encouraged friends to do likewise, thus originating many important Soviet art collections among a number of wealthy Swiss families. The authorities did not review paintings exported by individuals for private collections as they did those taken out for exhibition or resale. Delays were terrible, but the paintings eventually began to arrive in the West, each with stamped export documents, across which the authorities had written: "Of No Artistic Value."

By Christmas of 1985, the Jolleses had enough work to mount an exhibition. Claudia, now deeply involved in her father's projects, went with Jean-Hubert Martin to Moscow to present Kabakov with a list of work and a floor plan of the gallery where she and Martin would co-curate his exhibition. Kabakov designed the show. In the summer of 1986, it opened in the Kunsthalle in Berne. No one knew whether it would strengthen Kabakov's position in the USSR or lead to more trouble; because she wanted to avoid causing Kabakov serious difficulties, Claudia took care to say that it was not a dissident exhibition, and since the Soviet Union was then seen

solely in political terms, the press was not interested. This was fine by Claudia, whose chief purpose was that the work be seen by informed people capable of understanding some of its immense complexities, its private language and internal, encoded references. Later, Claudia Jolles helped Kabakov and Bulatov leave the Soviet Union for the first time; in recent years she has curated some of the best exhibitions of Soviet art in the West, including a major 1990 retrospective at the Centro Luigi Pecci in Prato, near Florence.

While the Jolleses were getting to know the most important figures of the Soviet vanguard, mounting shows of their work, the complex structures of the Soviet art world were being explored by a West German conceptual artist named Lisa Schmitz. A teacher at the Berlin art academy, she is in her mid-thirties, tall, with long, wavy hair, big, clear eyes, and a craggy nose reminiscent of one of the foothills of the Pyrenees. Very stylish, she is a serious artist in her own right, whose work includes performance pieces, installations, and texts.

Ilya Kabakov, "Installation III" (detail), from *He Lost His Mind, ressed, Ran Away Naked* (1990, five murals, acrylic on paper; eight panels, oil on masonite; also clothing, wood paneling, cardboard, wooden barriers, table and benches, text, and found objects).



Lisa traveled on the trans-Siberian express in 1986 and loved it; when she arrived in Moscow she fell in love with a Russian and for a year made regular visits to see him. Just before a visit in the spring of 1987, six other Berlin artists suggested to her that they might all collaborate on a project with some Soviets. "There must be artists there," they said, and so began the first major group exhibition of Soviet art in the West at the Bahnhof Westend in Berlin.

Organizing the project was an exhausting task. Lisa approached the cultural attaché at the West German embassy in Moscow, who said that it was interesting but impossible, since the artists she might meet no doubt had had trouble with the KGB. He did, however, suggest that she call the Union of Artists, the neo-Stalinist organization to which government-subsidized artists must belong. The union refused to negotiate directly with a nongovernment agent, adding that, in any event, exchange programs were fully scheduled through the early nineties (some of which included retrospectives of Francis Bacon, Günther Uecker, and Gilbert and George; by contrast, the Soviet artists sent to the West were, without exception, undistinguished). Back in Germany, however, Lisa learned that one of the best Soviet painters, Nikita Alexeev, had moved to Paris six months earlier with the help of an arranged marriage to a Western friend.

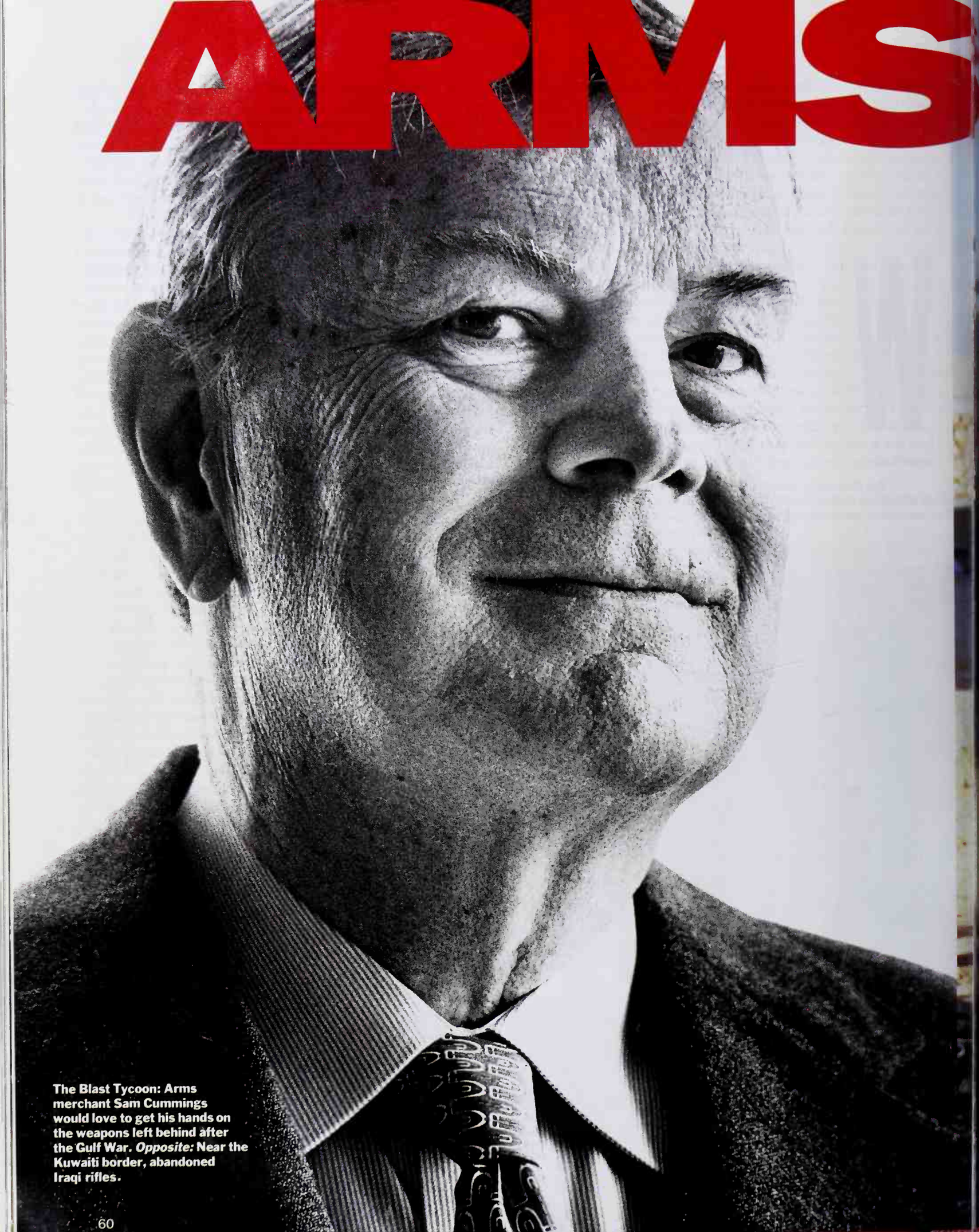
She went to see him immediately. He doubted her project was feasible but gave her the telephone numbers of the most important artists in Moscow and wished her luck. In mid-July, with two other Berlin artists, she went to the USSR. Sotheby's auction was still a year in the future, and there was no glint of competitiveness among the Soviet artists. The West was still only a dream or a game. Everyone took Lisa Schmitz and her friends to see everyone else. That no one had ever thought of such a project as hers posed no problem; the artists were quite content that, like all interesting things in Moscow, it should have come out of the blue. In any case, they thought the whole undertaking so far outside the bounds of possibility that decisions were little more than amusing rhetorical exercises. For Lisa, the project meant more: "Here was the community of the intellect that I had sought for so many years and never found, an echo of my student days. I felt instantly at home with the seriousness and playfulness of the conversation, with the deep engagement with art and with life."

Ilya Kabakov in front of his installation *The Red Wagon* (1991, various media and music), at the Düsseldorf Kunsthalle.

When she returned to Germany, in August of 1987, she burst into the office of Tina Bauermeister at the Berliner Festspiele, organizer of many important international festivals, who had put her off on the phone. "Hello," she said, after pushing past the secretaries into Bauermeister's

(Continued on page 93)

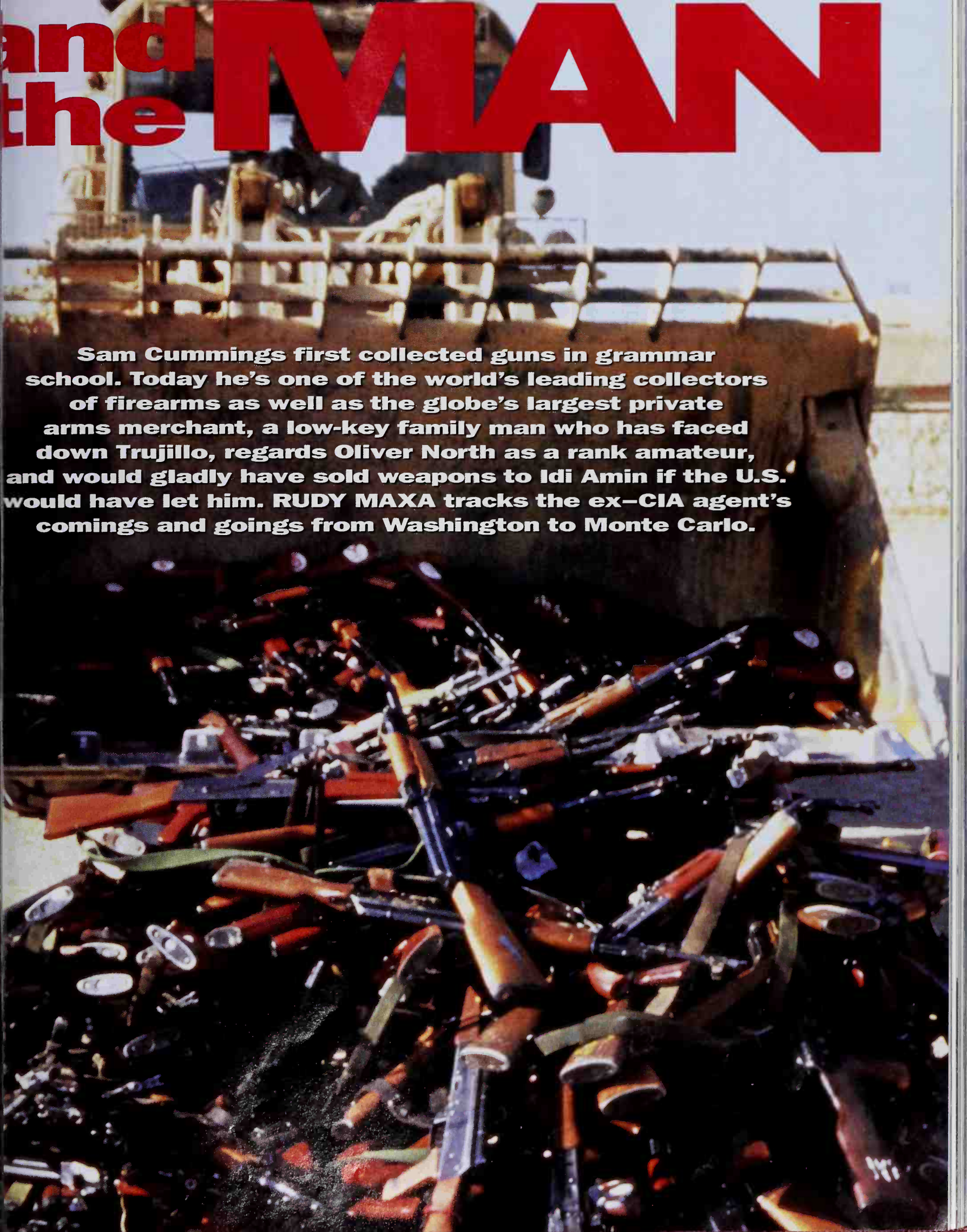
ARMS



The Blast Tycoon: Arms merchant Sam Cummings would love to get his hands on the weapons left behind after the Gulf War. *Opposite:* Near the Kuwaiti border, abandoned Iraqi rifles.

and the MAN

Sam Cummings first collected guns in grammar school. Today he's one of the world's leading collectors of firearms as well as the globe's largest private arms merchant, a low-key family man who has faced down Trujillo, regards Oliver North as a rank amateur, and would gladly have sold weapons to Idi Amin if the U.S. would have let him. RUDY MAXA tracks the ex–CIA agent's comings and goings from Washington to Monte Carlo.



EVEN BEFORE THE EMIR OF KUWAIT RETURNED to his homeland to survey the havoc caused by Iraqi occupation, Sam Cummings did his own damage assessment. To Cummings, the news photos of desert battlefields littered with burned-out tanks, abandoned weapons, and unburied corpses represented a gold mine, a precious window of opportunity for profit.

There, flung across the desert floor or neatly stacked in underground bunkers, were the spoils of war: weapons, thousands and thousands of weapons. Iraqi soldiers fleeing the Allied onslaught had left behind Russian-made AK-47 and AK-74 rifles, RPK machine guns, ammunition, RPG-7 and RPG-18 grenade launchers—just the kind of stuff that has made Sam Cummings very, very rich.

HIS PEAR-SHAPED BODY, ROUND, CHERUBIC FACE, AND deep drawl call Arthur Godfrey to mind. He is given to puns and a wry wit. Despite his millions, he is frugal, traveling the world in coach with one carry-on bag, wearing twenty-year-old suits, and checking into Holiday Inns that give corporate rates. He neither drinks nor smokes. When he writes postcards, Cummings is careful to fill up all available space. He is not a wasteful man.

Although he lives in Monaco, he never visits the casino or hangs out with the principality's pretty people. He appears as ordinary as the insurance agent next door, an apparent cipher who, at sixty-four, doesn't look or live at all the way a novelist might portray the world's largest private arms merchant.

Unless, of course, that novelist was John le Carré, who has always understood the essential plainness of the real world's heroes and villains. Sam Cummings has prospered as an arms merchant by being gray, not by swaggering around the globe wearing a cape, drinking champagne, and overtipping. Instead, he has kept a sharp eye for the main chance and has studiously avoided offering opinions about who's right and who's wrong in conflicts from Central America to the Middle East.

Deposed Ugandan dictator Idi Amin, shown here in 1989, once sent his private jet for Cummings.

"We like to say, Whoever wins, we win," explains Cummings, who founded Interarms nearly forty years ago. "We can supply the loser with new material, or we can buy the captured material from the winner."

And so he has. In 1954 Cummings bought British Vampire jets from Sweden and sold them to Dominican Republic president Rafael Leonidas Trujillo. In the same year, he sold 10,000 Sten guns to Guatemala, and the next year, after the government there had been overthrown, he returned to buy 80,000 surplus weapons and sell Garand M-1s that had been lend-leased to England by the United States. He has sold automatic rifles to Fidel Castro, bought Soviet-made weapons captured by the Israelis from the Egyptians, and recalibrated light machine guns bought from the Belgian government for customers in Asia.

A network of former defense ministers and retired generals working around the world on commission apprise Cummings of business opportunities. Sales potential is limited only by the governments of the United States and Great Britain, the appropriate one of which must approve the shipment of any weapons to other countries from Interarms warehouses in suburban Washington, D.C., or Manchester, England.

Which explains why, during the Falklands War, Cummings had to tell the Argentine ambassador over lunch in Washington that Interarms could not sell him Exocet missiles. When Uganda's Idi Amin sent a private jet to fetch Cummings in the south of France to talk business, Cummings told the dictator's advisers they shouldn't waste their time. Ditto to Libya's Muammar Al-Qaddafi.

Not that Cummings would have *minded* selling arms to Argentina, Libya, or Uganda—he was simply being realistic. He knew neither the State Department in Washington nor Whitehall in London would issue Interarms the "end user" certificates necessary to export weapons.

But from his office near Washington, and from his home on the French Riviera, Cummings watched the Iraqi conflict with special interest. He hadn't been able to sell weapons to either Iraq or Iran when those two countries were at war. That was the province of governments, including the United States, which had decided that under no circumstances could Iran be allowed to defeat Iraq.

Now the United States was bashing the country in whose direction it had once tilted. Cummings could be excused his world-weary point of view. Another alliance shifted, another strongman demonized. He has seen it all before—just when it appears that peace is breaking out all over, all hell breaks loose. And at the heart of it, as always, is the almighty gun. Cummings has a favorite quote for such situations.

"I think it's the old Arab saying, that there are only three

"We like to say whoever win

Cummings in front of his cabana in Monte Carlo, where he has lived since the early 1960s in a $2 million, fourteen-room apartment.

eternal elements in the world: God, human folly, and laughter," he says. "And since the first two pass our comprehension, we must do what we can with the third."

Cummings has done very well with the second, believing firmly that the military arms business is based on human folly. So it was only natural that agents of Interarms were in touch with Kuwaiti officials days after the war ended, offering to scour the desert for weapons to resell.

But to Cummings's chagrin, the Allied forces seemed intent on either destroying enemy armaments—so they couldn't be reused—or collecting them for their own uses. For the moment, at least, Cummings had no need to rearrange the shelves of his warehouses. But the cupboard is hardly bare. Those warehouses still contain enough firepower to equip thirty-five divisions of 10,000 men each.

HOW DO YOU GROW UP TO BECOME THE "MERCHANT OF Menace," as *Harper's* magazine labeled Cummings twenty years ago? What accounts for Cummings's fascination with things that go boom? The way he tells it, the genesis of his

e win," explains Cummings.

love for guns was the discovery, when he was a little boy, of a rusty German Maxim machine gun behind an American Legion hall in Philadelphia. The young Cummings restored the weapon to near-mint condition, and so began a hobby that would mature into a lifelong endeavor.

Cummings's father enjoyed inherited wealth courtesy of his family's mineral-water business. But in 1929, two years after Sam was born, his father lost the family funds in the stock market crash. The servants departed, and the senior Cummings, after working some blue-collar jobs, died of a heart attack.

As a boy, he found a rusty German machine gun and has loved guns ever since.

To support her son and daughter, Cummings's mother managed a small apartment building that her family owned and began buying, renovating, and reselling modest homes in suburban Philadelphia. Her business flourished, but she left it, moving with her children to Washington, D.C. Cummings's sister, Lilla, grew up to earn a considerable fortune in Washington real estate, before making the newspapers several years ago following an acrimonious divorce from former senator John Tower, the Texas Republican who died in a commuter-plane crash last April.

For his part, Cummings knows his passion for guns causes a few raised eyebrows.

"Some people have tried to read Freudian symbolism into that—fatherless child playing with machine gun—and maybe they're right," he says. "But Freud himself said that sometimes a cigar is only a cigar. I think I was fascinated by the machinery of the gun. It took me two years to figure out how to work it, but by age ten, I was the only Maxim machine-gun expert in my neighborhood."

After a stint stateside in the army as an infantry sergeant and gun instructor, Cummings attended George Washington University in Washington on the GI Bill. In his spare time, he bought and sold military curiosities. He once paid fifty cents apiece for some 2,000 German Army helmets at a Richmond, Virginia, scrap yard, then sold them for four dollars each to the curator of the Ordnance Museum in Maryland (who subsequently sold them to Hollywood producers for World War II movies). The deal foreshadowed his future and cultivated negotiating skills that would serve him well across the table from generals and dictators with last names like Marcos, Somoza, Trujillo, Castro, and Nasser.

AS TOURISTS IN 1948, CUMMINGS AND A COUPLE OF COLlege buddies drove through war-ravaged Europe, where he was startled to see piles of abandoned military equipment rusting in the countryside. If he could have, Cummings would have loaded the weapons onto a plane and flown them back to Washington. But he returned with only souvenirs and began working as a twenty-seven-dollar-a-week file clerk while attending night law school.

Soon after the start of the Korean War, an agency at which Cummings had previously applied for a job called with an opening. It was the Central Intelligence Agency, looking for a small-arms analyst.

"I sat in an office in Washington looking at pictures of matériel captured in Korea," he recalls. "Then I'd write on the bottom, 'This is such-and-such type of rifle; it was made at such-and-such a time at the following factories and could have been delivered to North Korea by the following means.' I wasn't exactly hired as a key man on the policy level."

But a memo came across his desk that twenty-four-year-old Cummings found odd. The CIA had asked American embassies in Europe to report on the status of weapons left over from World War II. The consensus was that there was no German surplus weaponry, a conclusion Cummings knew from his trip abroad had to be wrong. He attached a mildly dissenting memo to the report and sent it on its way.

Weeks later he was summoned to the office of the CIA's deputy director, Allen Dulles.

"Up I went with my thin briefcase, all alone," recalls Cummings. "I was nervous—you're talking about a second lieutenant going up to see the army corps commander, so to speak. Two secretaries confirmed my appointment, and I was ushered into the next room, where Dulles's assistant was, who happened to be Richard Helms. Helms [who would become CIA director himself in 1966] saw this twenty-four-year-old carrying a briefcase and asked, 'Where's Cummings?' thinking I was the briefcase carrier. I said I was Cummings, and one of those expressions—'Good God, another one'—crossed Mr. Helms's face."

Dulles, the grand old man of the CIA, received Cummings cordially and told him that his memo had repudiated observations by some high-ranking military men. Cummings said he could speak only from personal experience derived from his travels through Europe two years earlier, but he felt certain there was plenty of surplus weaponry stockpiled in Europe, because there was no reason it should have been destroyed. In fact, government officials either didn't know where the weapons were stockpiled or didn't care.

Within days, Cummings was reassigned to the CIA's covert branch. He prepared to embark on a secret mission that would last eighteen months and remain a secret until 1975, when CIA director William Colby mentioned the operation in general terms during wide-ranging Senate hearings on the agency.

POSING AS A REPRESENTATIVE OF A CIA-OWNED COMpany based in Los Angeles, Cummings was to travel through Europe buying surplus weapons, supposedly for use as props in American war movies. His partner was an equally unlikely

undercover agent, a Hollywood cinematographer named Leo Lippe. Much older than Cummings, Lippe was brought to the operation to add a touch of glamour and maturity.

Cummings was told that Lippe had proved valuable to the United States during World War II by surreptitiously purchasing pressure cookers for the Office of Strategic Services, the forerunner of the CIA. Cummings says he never understood what the importance of pressure cookers to the war effort might have been, and Lippe died long ago, so the mystery remains.

Lippe, a Brooklyn native, had quit school before learning how to read, and the two men made quite a pair—the young gun enthusiast who knew nothing about movies and the illiterate movie-industry veteran who knew nothing about guns.

The weapons they purchased were to be shipped back to the United States and re-marked (so there would be no evidence of American handling) at military ordnance depots. Fearing that American troops might have to abandon Korea, the military was considering launching forces loyal to Chiang Kai-shek into mainland China in order to relieve pressure on the Korean front. By using German weapons secured by Cummings and Lippe, the Nationalist Chinese could more persuasively deny American involvement.

For all of 1951 and most of 1952, Cummings wheeled and dealed his way through Europe, from England to Norway to Turkey, purchasing approximately 200 million rounds of German ammunition, at least 80,000 German Mauser rifles, 10,000 German machine guns, and approximately 100,000 9-mm machine pistols. Meanwhile, Lippe simply settled into a Geneva hotel suite to live a life of luxury appropriate to his position as a Hollywood mogul.

"My job was to find the stuff, inspect everything, and then arrange the purchase," recalls Cummings. "Leo's job was to sign the letters of credit. I'd say, 'Leo, we need $4.2 million tomorrow,' so he'd phone Washington and the funds would be transferred by wire from New York—which caused the Swiss astonishment. Leo was not known as a Rockefeller, but they couldn't check him out.

"Leo always pretended it was his personal fortune, a routine deal, and in that role he was perfect. Because he was virtually illiterate, he didn't know what a letter of credit was. I would prepare them at the bank, call him at the hotel, and he'd toddle over, pretend he'd forgotten his glasses, ask me where to sign, and that was that."

The buying spree cost Uncle Sam about $100 million in 1951 dollars. To put things in perspective, that's about twice the amount of money (without adjusting for inflation) alleged to have passed through a Swiss bank account during the botched covert operation involving Oliver North and the weapons-for-hostages deal of several years ago.

But as the Korean War began to wind down in 1952, it became clear that there would be no invasion of mainland China—a good thing, says Cummings, because the Nationalist Chinese forces were so outnumbered that "it would have made the Bay of Pigs look like Mother Teresa's teatime."

Cummings assumes the ammunition he purchased was used for training purposes in Taiwan. He is certain some of the weapons were dropped by air into mainland China to resistance fighters battling the Communists. Cummings knows this because of a 1979 visit to the People's Liberation Army in Beijing.

"I saw the very matériel that had my fingerprints on it in a museum case," he remembers. "It was explained to me that this material had been captured from the reactionary forces of the Kuomintang, Chiang Kai-shek's forces. I just shook my head and said wasn't that terrible."

After Cummings returned from Europe in 1952, he did one last assignment for the CIA—in Latin America, where he met and married his first wife, Inka, a German-born flight attendant who was living in Costa Rica. (He married his current, Swiss-born wife, Irma, a former hotel accountant, in 1960, and they have twin daughters, Susan and Diana, now in their late twenties.) Then Cummings left the government to enter the arms business on his own. He was certain that one man's obsolete guns could be another's state-of-the-art weaponry. So he printed up letterheads and listed himself as vice president to give the illusion that there was at least one more employee.

Cummings wrote to embassies, police chiefs, and ministers of defense around the world soliciting obsolete arms for cash or trade. At first, Cummings remembers, "the silence was deafening."

Then one day in 1953, the chief of police of Panama, Bolivre Vellerino, wrote to tell Cummings he had some weapons confiscated from smugglers that he wanted to sell. Cummings flew to Panama to discover "a cavern of Ali Baba" full of guns he knew he could resell. He agreed to purchase the lot for $25,000 (that he didn't have), called a California company, and sold the cache for $60,000, pocketing about $20,000 after expenses.

That first deal led to a contact in Costa Rica, with Colonel Manuel Ventura, which led to a contact in Nicaragua, where

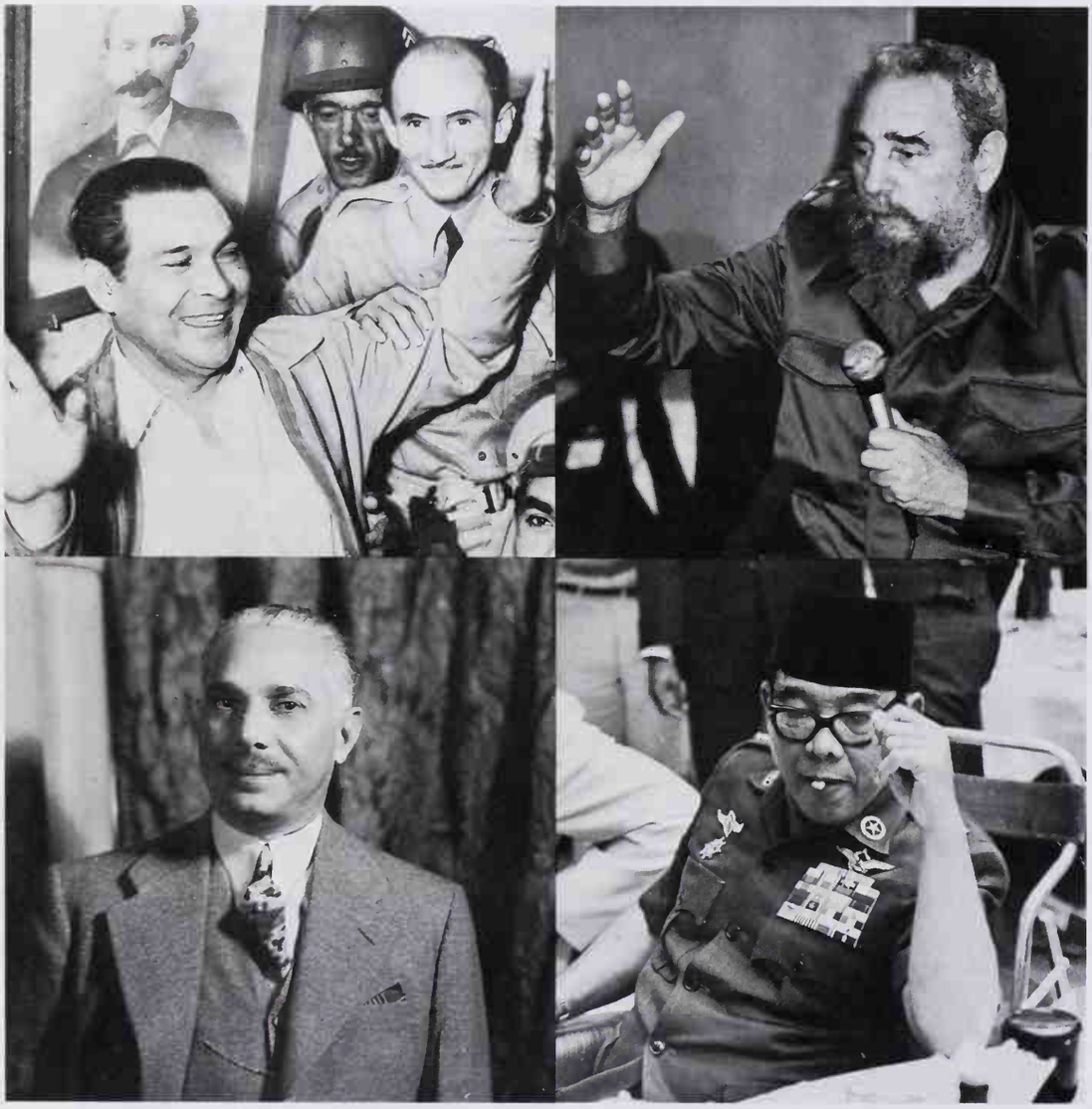
Shooting Esprit: From Cummings's 2,000-weapon private collection, two rare ivory-handled pistols from the 1850s.

Obsolete guns to one man are state-

the father of the late Anastasio Somoza Debayle (the father's name was Anastasio Somoza García) befriended Cummings. A stopover in Havana earned him Fulgencio Batista as a client, and he suggested that Cummings visit his buddy Trujillo. And so began the daisy chain of deals that continues to this day.

Cummings says he can't remember all the heads of state with whom he's done deals.

"It's not lawn mowers or plowshares I'm selling," says Cummings. "It's swords, and you have to deal with either the minister or the head of state because they're the people who control that material. And it controls them."



Revolting Characters: Interarms customers over the years have included dictators such as (*clockwise from top left*) Cuba's Fulgencio Batista and Fidel Castro, Indonesia's Sukarno, and the Dominican Republic's Rafael Leonidas Trujillo.

And dealing with the powers that be is often sticky business. In 1959 Cummings had sold Armalite AR-10s to Fidel Castro before Washington decided to embargo arms shipments to Cuba. Six months later, while Cummings was visiting with Trujillo, some of Castro's adventurers launched an invasion of the Dominican Republic.

They were pinned down on a beach and quickly repulsed, but Trujillo got hold of one of the AR-10s taken from a Cuban invader and angrily confronted Cummings with the weapon. Cummings admitted he had sold the guns to Castro but mollified Trujillo by convincing him that he had no idea Castro would be so rude as to use them to invade Trujillo's turf. And thank goodness, said Cummings, Trujillo had those British Vampire fighters that had helped turn away the bad guys.

In the end, Trujillo placed an order with Cummings for 25,000 AR-10s of his own. It was the tightest spot Sam Cummings ever found himself in, except for the time an Ethiopian officer chased him around with a spear after he had offered what the Ethiopian considered too low a price for some weapons.

IN ADDITION TO THE SALE OF MILITARY weapons, Interarms manufactures Walther sporting guns under license from the German firm in a facility in Alabama. More than twenty-five years ago, Interarms became a major sporting-gun wholesaler when an Interarms executive, Dick Winter, cracked the department-store market. He sold 160,000 Mausers to Montgomery Ward and tens of thousands of other rifles to Sears, Gimbels, and Macy's.

Not surprisingly, Cummings and Interarms have been in the forefront of opposition to gun control. About the much-touted Brady bill, which would require a national seven-day waiting period for handgun purchases, Cummings is unenthusiastic. "If it would work, I'd be the first one to go for it," he says. He insists, however, that the legislation would actually have something of a reverse effect, because it would deprive law-abiding citizens of the ease of buying weapons. As for the bill's progenitor, former Reagan press secretary James Brady, who was crippled in an assassination attempt, Cummings says, "The law would not have protected him anyway."

As early as 1965, Cummings testified before a Senate subcommittee considering gun-control legislation. He suggested that Americans loved guns "because they [are] reminiscent of the smell of outdoors, military heroism, the intensity of the hunt, or merely because they are fascinated by the finely machined metal parts."

He argued that widespread ownership of guns didn't necessarily mean society must be scarred by violence, pointing to Switzerland, where virtually every male citizen possesses a gun but where there is very little crime involving weapons. His testimony ended with Senator Thomas Dodd, a

e-art to another.

Connecticut Democrat, asking if he kept bazookas in stock.

"I think we have bazookas in stock at the present moment," answered Cummings. "That is an export item with us."

"And mortars?" asked Dodd.

"Mortars we always have in stock," answered Cummings.

"It must be," remarked Dodd, "quite a place over there."

It is quite a place, in the warehouses of Interarms, just across the Potomac River from Capitol Hill. The walls of Cummings's spacious office, with its zebra-skin rug, display a small part of his 2,000-weapon private gun collection, including a Thompson submachine gun. Four big Frederic Remington bronzes serve as office sculpture.

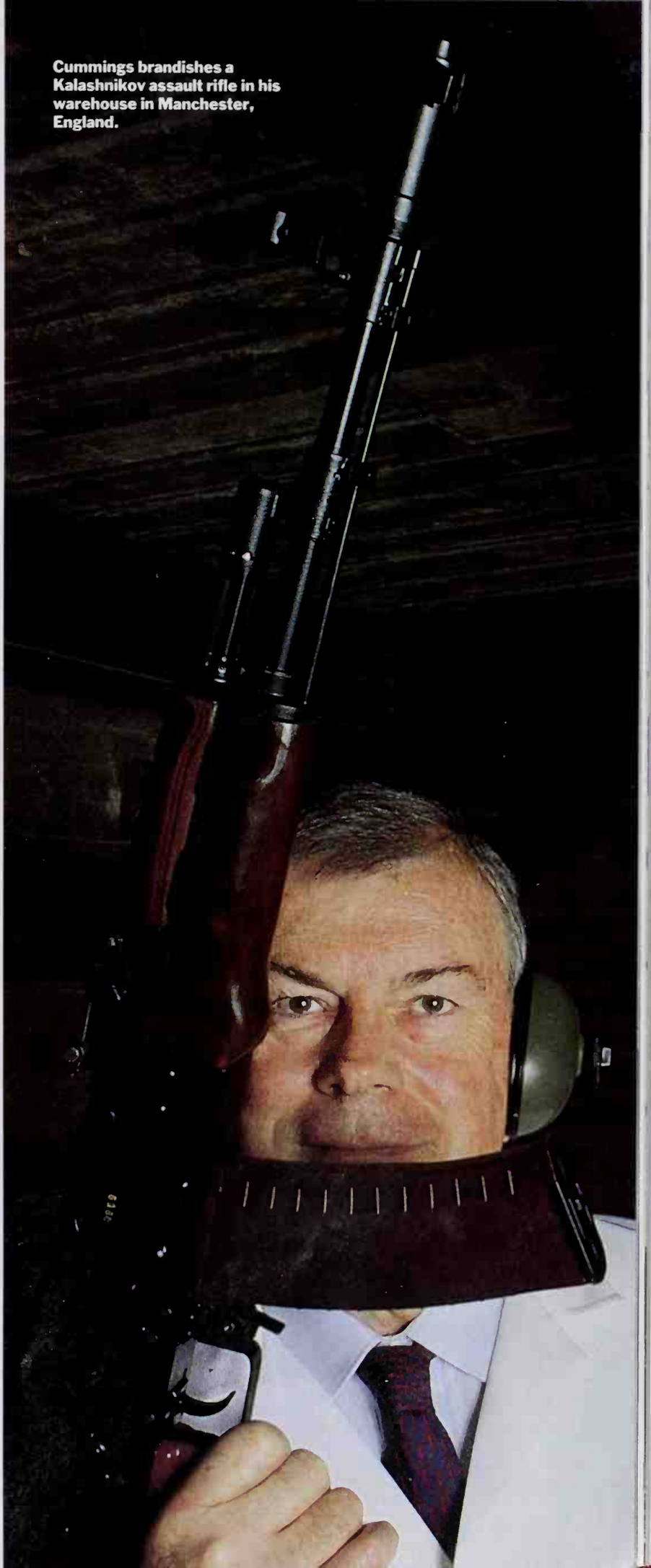
The collection is considered one of the two or three finest of its kind in the world, right alongside those of oil heir Philip R. Phillips (who specializes in Colts) of Bartlesville, Oklahoma, and former cannon-manufacturing representative Hendrikus Visser of the Hague. "Undoubtedly, Sam Cummings owns guns that are not extant elsewhere," says Arthur Pence, former associate curator of the National Firearms Museum.

To Cummings, the attraction seems to be a combination of history and technology. "They represent the best ingenuity, mechanically and artistically, of their respective periods," he says. "To me, that's fascinating. They're much better than toys, as I found out as a child in Philadelphia, and they last longer."

The weapons date from the seventeenth century to the present. And although Cummings stresses that he's more interested in rare models than in guns owned by heads of state or famous military men, a number of his pieces once belonged to celebrated figures. Among them are a pair of King George III flintlock pistols that the British king gave to his physician at the time of the American Revolution, Nazi leader Hermann Goering's Mauser pistol, Kaiser Wilhelm's 1896 Mauser (serial number 1), a hunting rifle and gold-hilted sword presented to Napoleon in 1797, and the only pair of the British royal family's twentieth-century guns outside the royal gun rooms of Windsor and Sandringham (Edward VIII's Purdy shotguns, a twenty-first-birthday gift from his father, George V).

Cummings has offered to lend his collection to the city of Alexandria, Virginia, his U.S. headquarters, but the city council balked at paying for the construction of a museum, which is part of the proposed deal. He says he is on the verge of shipping the collection to his facility in Manchester, where "at least we can put it out and look at it ourselves." Until then, his treasures will remain in storage, where they have been for the past eight years, in his warehouses.

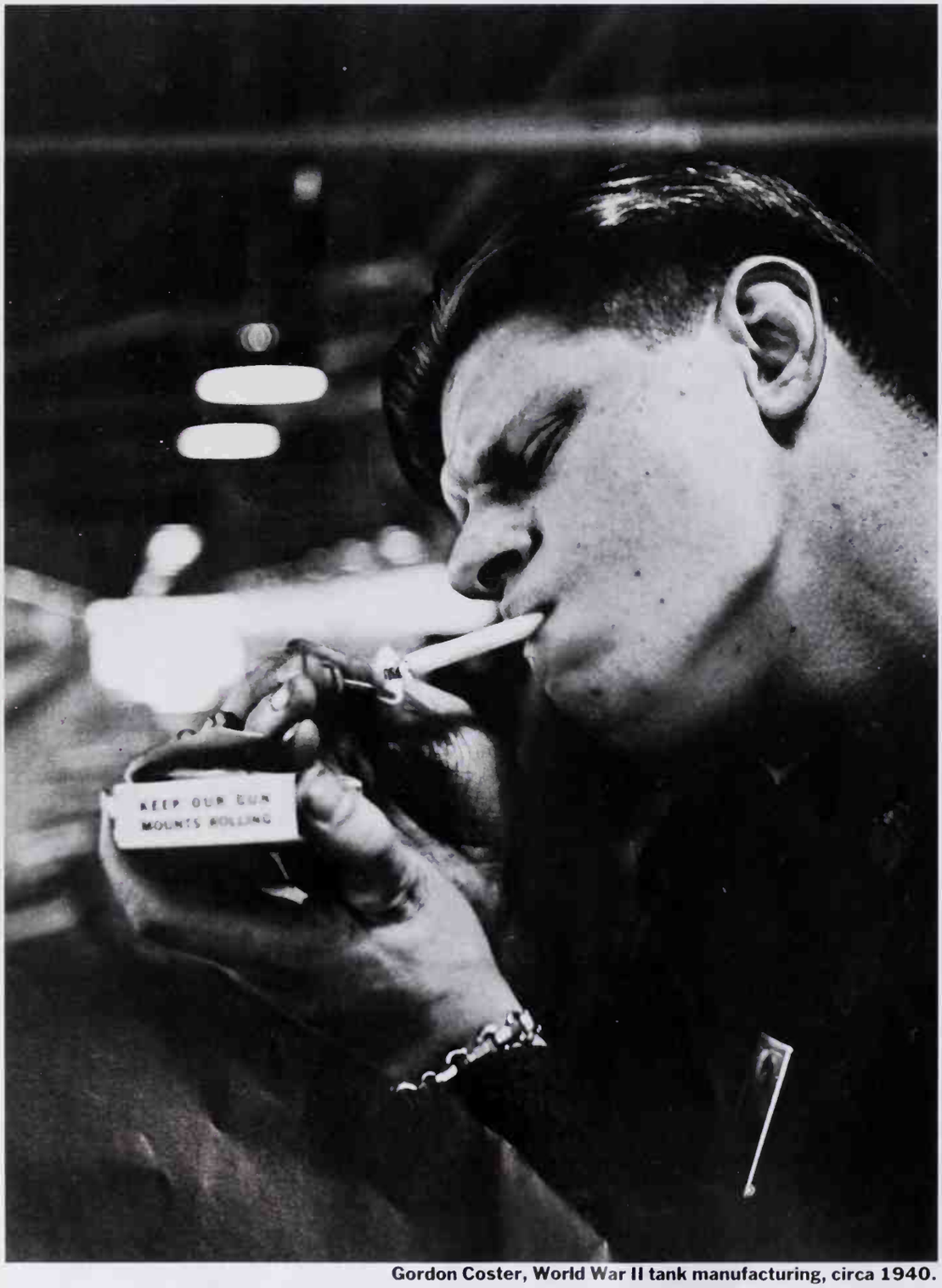
Those warehouses are located on prime land in the Old Town section of Alexandria. When Cummings began buying up the old buildings in the almost-abandoned warehouse district nearly four decades ago, he could not have known how valuable the real estate would become. Today his nine heavily secured brick buildings are surrounded by expensive town houses, chic restaurants, and gift shops that cater to affluent tourists and Washingtonians. *(Continued on page 96)*



Cummings brandishes a Kalashnikov assault rifle in his warehouse in Manchester, England.

A continuing series on contemporary photography.

photo player



Gordon Coster, World War II tank manufacturing, circa 1940.

New York photo dealer and collector Keith de Lellis has found the ultimate photo opportunity in commercial photography from the twenties to the fifties.

WHILE OTHER COLLECTORS ARE CONsumed with the frenzy of the latest trend, Keith de Lellis has carefully mined half a century of photography through rediscovery. For twenty years, his specialty has been recognizing and locating work by professional photographers whose careers have been obscured by time.

The intense, intelligent thirty-five-year-old New York collector and private dealer began buying daguerreotypes and nineteenth-century vintage images while in junior high school in Queens. "I started out looking for things in flea markets and a handful of New York antique stores," he says. "It was a small universe then, when $100 was a fortune to pay for a photograph."

De Lellis built his own collection—which now numbers 20,000 images—buying and selling bodies of work by successful photographers who flourished in the decades from the twenties to the fifties: commercial photographers like American modernists Edward Quigley and Thurman Rotan, fashion photographer Louise Dahl-Wolfe, documentary photographer Weegee, and industrial photographers Harold Costain and Gordon Coster.

Operating from a rental apartment on Manhattan's Upper East Side, de Lellis has been a discreet wholesale resource for several of the canniest dealers and most dedicated collectors of between-the-wars photography. →

Emery R
Back Cover

Ira W. Martin, *Progress of Civilization,* 1931.

Arthur (Weegee) Fellig, leg distortion, circa 1950.

REPRINTED WITH THE PERMISSION OF WILMA WILCOX/WEEGEE ESTATE

REPRINTED WITH THE PERMISSION OF JOANNA T. STEICHEN

Left: **Edward Steichen, *Mat***
***and Match Boxes*, 1926.**

Right: **Harol**
Raw Sugar Stora

To find pictures, he combs libraries, courthouse files, wills, and early photography journals. He targets specialized areas that the label-oriented art world tends to overlook. Though he still patrols auctions and antique shows, de Lellis would rather deal directly with estate heirs or others who hold work.

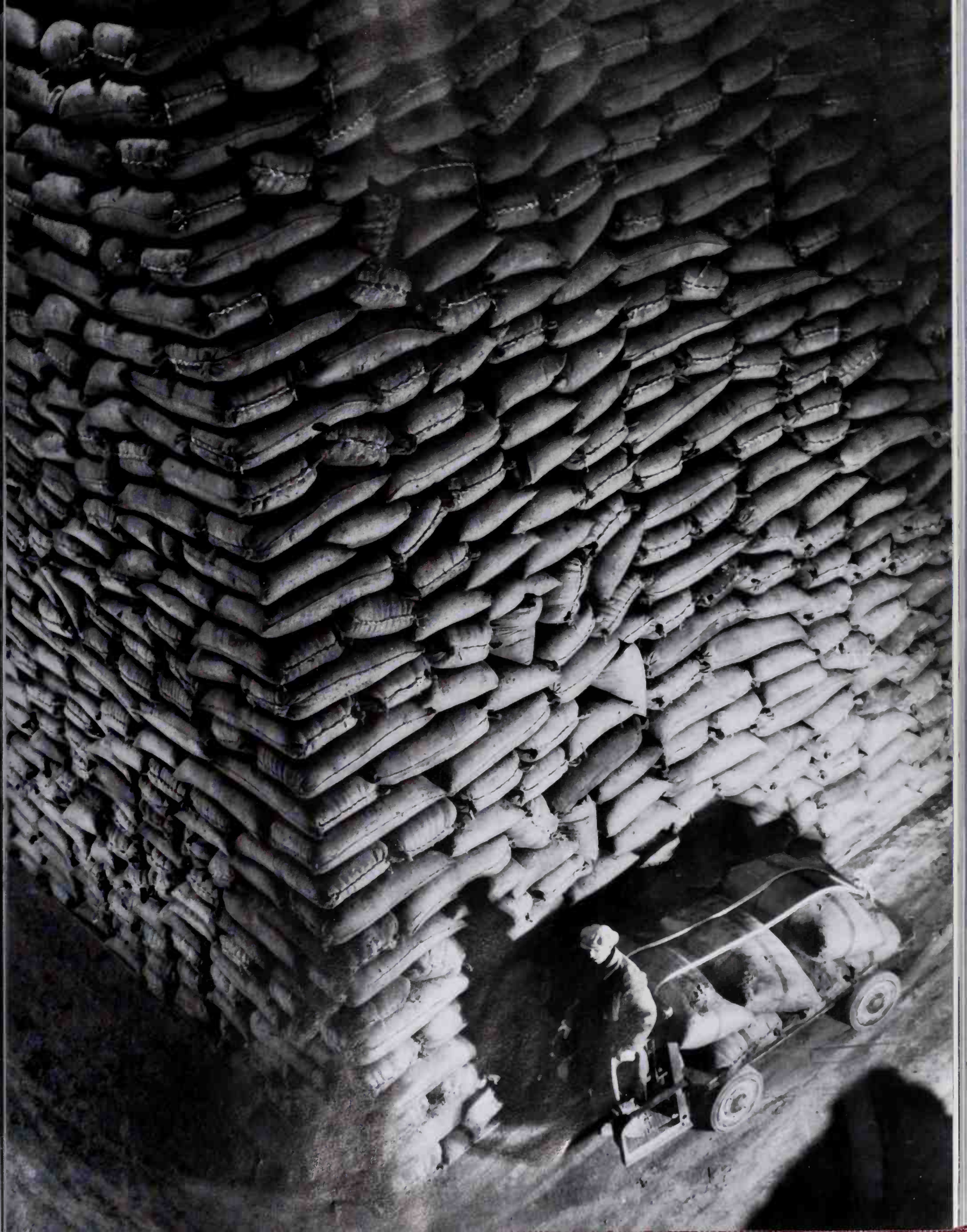
"Sometimes," de Lellis cautions, "it's very hard to get people to sell. These pictures represent their personal histories."

A recently acquired gem—bought this past spring at Sotheby's—is Edward Steichen's *Matches and Match Boxes*, a 1926 photograph that de Lellis calls "an important innovation in contemporary American textile design." He had first seen another example of it in private hands, passed down from the art director who originally commissioned it for the Stehli Silk Corporation. The company had asked various artists and photographers to create works that could be used for fabric designs. Steichen photographed *Matches* in a series using ordinary objects such as eyeglasses, sugar cubes, and cigarettes to form patterns.

"I consider it one of the great photographs of the 1920s," de Lellis says. "It was a photograph I've longed for for years."

Now de Lellis says he's investigating the sixties. "I now have the luxury of buying what I like, not just what the market wants to sell," he says. —*Alexandra Anderson-Spivy*

—*Photographs edited by Marc Balet*



mood indigo

This season, don't chase those blues away. The color that always looks classic is back and cooler than ever, which is why the boys in blue have never looked better.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY GUZMAN

Left:
Corduroy jodhpurs, cashmere cable-knit sweater, plaid wool sport shirt, blackwatch plaid oilcloth jacket, and silk ascot from POLO BY RALPH LAUREN. Riding boots by RALPH LAUREN FOOTWEAR.

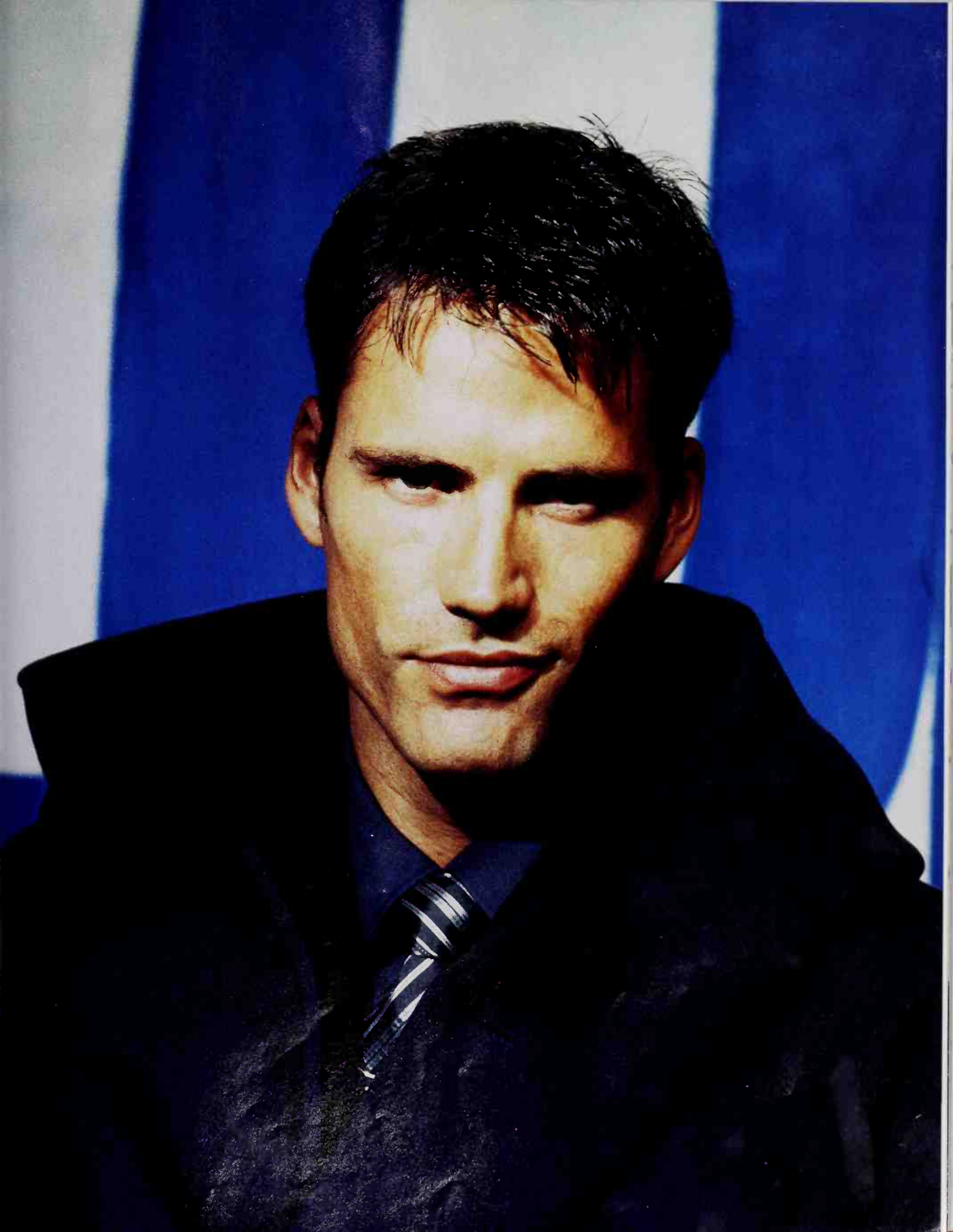
Right:
Wool sateen trousers, Italian wool three-button unconstructed slouch jacket coat, wool/cotton raglan turtleneck, and angora/wool overcoat by ROGER FORSYTHE FOR PERRY ELLIS SIGNATURE. Classic suede loafers by GUCCI.

Details, see Shopping Guide on page 85.

Right:
Cotton shirt, cotton corduroy vest, wool gabardine duffle coat, and diagonal-striped silk tie by ROMEO GIGLI.

Below:
Three-piece checked wool suit, silk shirt, wool three-quarter-length overcoat, wool sports jacket, and suede gloves by GIANNI VERSACE.

Details, see Shopping Guide on page 85.



Right:
Melton wool two-button jacket, cotton pants, cotton twill shirt with leather buttons, cashmere-lined gloves, pochette silk scarf, and braided leather belt by GIORGIO ARMANI.

Below:
Reversible wool country jacket, cropped wool cardigan, cotton poplin straight-collar shirt, silk tie, stretch wool pants, and leather belt by DOLCE & GABBANA.

Details, see Shopping Guide on page 85.

STYLIST: PATTY WILSON; STYLING ASSOCIATE: WAYNE SCOT LUKAS; GROOMING: LOSI FOR ORIBE AT ELIZABETH ARDEN; MODELS: TONY BROWN OF MEN/WOMEN, JOSH HOLLOWAY OF MANNER

bag-ettes

Less is always best, and this fall these exquisite miniature handbags are guaranteed to get more than a little attention.

photographs by James Wojcik

Opposite page: **Platinum chiffon-leather Matador coin purse, foreground, $155, and black velvet Matador clutch, $595, by PALOMA PICASSO. Available at Bergdorf Goodman, NYC; Henri Bendel, NYC. Black crocodile Kelly Sport by HERMÈS, $7,475. Available at Hermès Boutiques; Barneys New York. Gold quilted leather bag with "pearl" shoulder strap by CHANEL, about $1,860. Available at Chanel Boutiques; I. Magnin, San Francisco; Saks Fifth Avenue, San Francisco and Beverly Hills.**

This page: **Black quilted leather mini-bag with gold-chain and leather shoulder strap, foreground, by CHANEL, $440. Available at Barneys New York; all Chanel Boutiques. Bambino bags in red, fuchsia, or purple silk with bamboo handles by GUCCI, $495. Available at all Gucci stores.**

LABOUR PAINS

(Continued from page 18)

mones whizzing round me that I left school without the qualifications." She had become quite proficient in ballet, passing various exams, but had grown too tall for a career as a ballet dancer. Her plan was to become a librarian instead. Her mother took her to Chester to apply for a job with Boot's, the chain of pharmacies that also operated lending libraries in some of its branches. Since there was no vacancy for a librarian but a shortage of sales staff, Glenda took a job selling medicines.

"I kept the stock books beautifully and worked behind the embrocation- and cough-mixture counter," said Glenda. "I went through the sixteen-to-eighteen phase with no great ambition and joined the Hoylake YMCA Amateur Dramatic Society simply for something to do. Then someone said I ought to do this professionally, and I got a grant from Cheshire Education Authority to study at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art for two years."

At the same time Jackson was drifting into the acting profession, she was developing her political sensibility. With her working-class background, it is not surprising that she joined the Labour party as soon as she left school and started work, although her parents had never been socialists or politically active. But it was her appreciation of literature that deepened and enriched her political commitment in her late teens and early twenties. This, and not any knowledge of the classics or political theory, is at the root of her socialism. As a young acting student with plenty of time on her hands, she devoured Dickens as well as such American social-protest novelists as John Dos Passos and Sinclair Lewis. (She also read Alan Paton's classic novel about the early agonies of apartheid, *Cry the Beloved Country,* and was thereafter a passionate supporter of the United Nations boycott against South Africa, to which Equity, the British actors' union, adheres.)

Jackson received her diploma from RADA in 1956, at the age of twenty, but was warned not to expect regular work until she was forty. And, indeed, there ensued six long, hard years in which she had scarcely any work, occasionally playing a maid in a provincial repertory play, doing a bit part in the Lindsay Anderson film *This Sporting Life* (1963), and otherwise having to earn her living as a shop assistant again, this time in Woolworth's and British Home Stores, or as a waitress in the Soho section of London. "It was very difficult," Glenda has recalled, "going home from the British Home Stores and keeping telling yourself, 'You're an actress,' when you were not."

In 1958, she married Roy Hodges, an actor. At one point, she was unable to find an acting part for two years at a stretch. Her London stage debut came in *Alfie,* at the Mermaid Theatre in 1963, and in 1964, the pattern of instability was finally broken when she joined one of the national repertory companies, the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC), and was invited by Peter Brook, the innovative director, to join his Theater of Cruelty Season, which was sponsored by the RSC. She has said that the biggest financial change of her whole life was not when she became an Oscar-winning film actress able to command six-figure fees .but when she joined the RSC and "went from being casually employed at $55 a week to being regularly employed at $85." She played Charlotte Corday in Brook's famous production of Peter Weiss's *Marat/Sade,* which took her to Broadway and Paris before being committed to celluloid as well. "Peter Brook is the director who has influenced me most," Glenda has explained. "Meeting him was like finding an oasis in the desert. He crystallized ideas I'd always thought were possible."

"If Glenda went into politics, she'd be prime minister. If she'd gone into crime, she'd have been Jack the Ripper," remarked Roy Hodges, Jackson's ex-husband.

The Brook *Marat/Sade* moved to Broadway in December 1965 for a proposed thirteen-week run. Advance ticket sales were so impressive, however, that the run was extended, and the show broke the sales record for a nonmusical. Glenda landed herself into a little controversy, though, when she gave an outspoken interview to the *New York Times* in which she lambasted West End theater producers and said that West End theater deserved to die. "Theater eventually survives through its writers, not its actors. The exciting writers don't give their plays to commercial producers; they give them to the national rep or the Royal Court." In another interview, she again tore into conventional theater: "I never go to the theater, because it is boring, overrated, overpriced, and often pretentious. It is full of bad plays, bad actors, and bad directors."

Back in England, her theatrical career grew with a series of notable and controversial performances. Her Ophelia opposite David Warner's Hamlet provoked much debate because her fiery and strong-minded interpretation was pitted against Warner's deliberately dithering approach. "I played Ophelia the way I thought it should be played, and it caused an enormous furor. I have never read such terrible notices as those which appeared the next morning. But then other women told me, 'It was marvelous,' while men could hardly bring themselves to speak to me. . . . The more interesting parts, I find, seem to be on the darker side of human behavior."

There was another absorbing role, as Masha in a Royal Court production of Chekhov's *Three Sisters,* but Jackson had been spoiled by the intensity of working with Brook and was already feeling disillusioned with theater in London. Her interest turned to film and another guru director, Ken Russell, with whom she made three pictures. Her first major film role, as Gudrun in Russell's adaptation of the D. H. Law-

rence novel *Women in Love,* won her her first Oscar.

In 1969 Glenda was busy filming and becoming a mother, while husband Roy was now running an art gallery in Greenwich. "I'd done about six weeks of *Women in Love* when it turned out I was three months pregnant." She told the producer and director, who instead of saying she would have to withdraw from the film, simply congratulated her for her good fortune. "It was marvelous in the end, because I'm usually flat-chested, but this time when I took my clothes off, I had this marvelous, beautiful bosom."

Also around this time, the world was beginning to cultivate the image of Glenda Jackson as a sex symbol, an image that she regarded as laughable, preferring the description she had once been given as "the face that launched a thousand dredgers." In 1966 *Harper's* had wanted to include her in its survey of the world's most beautiful women. Critics and audiences could see what she was unable to—that although not conventionally beautiful, she nonetheless had an erotic, feral quality combined with an obvious self-possession that chimed in with the new feminist spirit. Her fierce eyes and sensual snarl were a world away from the other sex symbols of the sixties, such as Raquel Welch and Jane Fonda.

When she won the Oscar for Best Actress in 1971 for *Sunday Bloody Sunday,* one of the first persons to congratulate her was her idol Bette Davis, who had watched the ceremony on television from her home in New York. Glenda had neither the time nor the inclination to bask in glory, since she was already rehearsing for her lead role in the BBC TV series *Elizabeth R,* in which she played Queen Elizabeth I, just as Bette Davis had done thirty years earlier.

Nineteen seventy-one also found her pronouncing some radical political views, when she joined with fellow actresses Vanessa Redgrave and Jane Asher to call for the nationalization of the theater industry on the grounds that too many actors were unemployed most of the time, just as she had been in the early sixties.

With *Women in Love,* Jackson had become the actress who made screen nudity respectable. In *Sunday Bloody Sunday,* Jackson was introduced to actor Tony Britton on the set one morning. They were just exchanging pleasantries when director John Schlesinger ordered them into bed and they had to start performing. And in her second film for Ken Russell, *The Music Lovers,* about the life of Tchaikovsky, there was an energetic nude scene in a railway carriage that prompted Auberon Waugh to sneer at what he called her "Mohican pubic tufts." As a consequence of her reputation for molting, her agent was inundated with scripts that contained nude scenes, regardless of how appropriate they were to her as an actress. She was pretty scornful of the scripts she saw: "I think most of the time they put a woman in to prove that the hero isn't queer." One role that did not belong in this category was her feisty, independent single woman in the romantic comedy *A Touch of Class,* for which she received her second Oscar as Best Actress.

In 1976 her marriage to Roy Hodges collapsed. It must have been an unpleasant breakup; since that time she has pretty much given up any romantic entanglements, living alone for more than fourteen years. Although she has said that she has never been happier than when in love, she has vowed never to marry again. Her general opinion of men is caustic: "One heck of a lot of outlay for a very small return with most of them." The only man in her life is her twenty-one-year-old son, Daniel, now studying English literature at Leicester University and planning to become a journalist. Money has never been a primary consideration for Jackson. She had a reputation among Hollywood producers as someone who would work for peanuts if she liked the role enough. She is said to have turned down the offer of a $2.7 million fee to repeat her role from *A Touch of Class* in a sequel with her co-star, George Segal. While other British actors such as Michael Caine and Roger Moore went into tax exile abroad during the seventies, Jackson never wanted to live anywhere other than England.

In 1978 Jackson performed what has been perhaps her most critically acclaimed stage role to date: Cleopatra, in Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra,* directed by her old mentor Peter Brook. He had told her years earlier that if anyone asked her to play Cleopatra she should turn down the part because he wanted to do it with her when he reckoned she was old enough. Now that he had decided the time was ripe, the prospect filled her with dread. In her own words, she was "shit scared."

Parts for women in middle age are not appealing, she has frequently observed. "Women are seen almost always in terms of the emotional life of the story's dramatic engine, which is invariably a man. We are then slotted in pigeonholes—beddable, which usually means wives or mistresses, or nonbeddable, which means mothers, grandmothers, or aunts." For every Hedda Gabler, Mother Courage, or Clytemnestra (her stage role this year in Eugene O'Neill's *Mourning Becomes Electra,* at the Glasgow Citizen's Theater), there are dozens of demanding parts for men. "And I am certainly not going to hang around to play the nurse in *Romeo and Juliet.*"

It is work, above all else, that drives her: "I work to live, and I have a strong puritan ethic. I was taught to earn my pleasures and to earn through work." Even when she does earn her pleasures, though, she refuses conventional rewards. She doesn't take holidays: "I don't like them. I'm just not good at them." Instead, she prefers to spend her leisure time at her modest home in Blackheath, in Southeast London. "I'm really an unadventurous person," she has said, "and knowing there is always a place to go back to, where nothing changes no matter what you do, is terribly important."

None of the usual trappings of stardom have ever held any allure for her. After the birth of their son in 1970, her husband, Roy, took her to Hatton Garden to buy an emerald ring. She decided she didn't like it (she wasn't told its value—$960) and instead bought a few dollars' worth of plants. "Extraordinary woman," Roy later noted. "Fancy preferring plants to an emerald."

Long before her political ambitions emerged, her ex-husband remarked: "If Glenda went into politics, she would have become prime minister. If she'd gone into crime, she'd have been Jack the Ripper." Jackson dismisses any suggestion that she will want to head for the top in British politics. She will be no Melina Mercouri, the Greek film actress who became Greece's minister of culture. "I

have no cabinet or ministerial ambitions *at all*," she told the *Daily Mirror*; and in the *Times* she has said, "I would go in as the lowest form of political life on the back benches, and my interests would be housing, education, and the national health service." She may be used to playing queens like Elizabeth I and Cleopatra, but she has no desire to play the role of an iron lady in reality.

Glenda has been scathing in her criticism of Thatcher and the Thatcher years: "She personifies the worst aspects of the English character: greed, bigotry, and selfishness. . . . I see her time in power as a decade when we've been encouraged to reward that which I regard as being bad in the human character and to punish that which I regard as being good." Glenda has accused Thatcher of "mugging the arts" by imposing severe cutbacks on state subsidy of the theater and other activities. She believes that the next general election will be a struggle not merely for the transference of power but for the actual soul of the country.

Jackson on Redgrave: "It's obscene that somebody who lives in the tranquillity of Chiswick is preaching violent revolution. It would be different if she lived in the Middle East."

She is also scathing about Britain's other famously left-wing actress, Vanessa Redgrave. "I find it obscene that somebody who lives in the tranquillity of Chiswick [an upper-middle-class area of southwest London] is preaching violent revolution. I would probably think different of her if she lived in the Middle East, where she would be in the front line," she has said.

Unlike some of her politically active peers, Glenda Jackson's brand of politics is not very exotic, although she is very much the acutely articulate speaker one might expect her to be: "It's not the Opposition's job to pull the government's chestnuts out of the fire. . . "; "Unemployment sits like a corrosive fog upon the land" are some staple metaphors. One commentator has said that she "speaks liquid prose: grammatical, precise, yet beautifully fluent." Her message seems to be emotional in inspiration and hard-headed in application. To give some idea of where she stands in the spectrum of Labour party politics, she supported the moderate Denis Healey for the deputy leadership against Tony Benn (the former hereditary peer who repudiated his title and changed his name from Anthony Wedgewood Benn). "I am a committed socialist, but I don't go as far as Wedgewood Benn," she has said. "If he ever gets the leadership, we will have a Tory government ad infinitum. I don't believe the country is that left-wing. You have to be practical, have to know what will work." Glenda despised the "endless bickering" that was endemic to the party in the early eighties, realizing that such antics were a sure vote loser, and is a staunch supporter of her friend Neil Kinnock, who has tamed the warring factions and stamped his authority on the party.

The important thing for Jackson is to restore what she sees as the fabric of a civilized society. She is a defender of the welfare state: "It gave me the chance of further education: all my fees paid at drama school and a very generous grant, compared with what students get today." In 1990, when playing at the Almeida Theater in Islington for $300 a week, she told one paper that "London is a slum, let's face it. Our infrastructure is falling apart. It's easier to get to Mongolia than here [i.e., to Islington from her home in Blackheath]." In many ways Glenda resembles an American New Deal Democrat. It is the bread-and-butter issues of housing, health, and education that concern her, not radical causes like official secrecy, Irish republicanism, gender politics, and so on—all the obsessions of the fashionable middle-class left. "Maybe it's lack of imagination on my part, but I've never been concerned to wonder who I am. . . . I'm of a generation and a socioeconomic grouping that had to work for its living and didn't have time to wonder." Presumably because she is so clear-sighted about her roots, she doesn't allow her pride to become a caricature of itself. There is no fetishistic worship of working-class culture. She once recalled the time when actors "worked like stink to get northern accents. You didn't dare speak unless you came from a working-class background. Ludicrous." Interestingly, she has been adopted by the very masculine railway union, Aslef, as a sponsored candidate; and there is a joke at Westminster that if elected, she will be the only Labour MP who still drinks Guinness and smokes Woodbines.

Some have wondered whether Jackson really has the temperament for politics and whether her theatrical background is likely to make her a prima donna in the House of Commons. Fortunately, her innate modesty gives the lie to any such musing, and if that were not enough, she is scornful of the notion that actors and actresses are by definition arrogant and preening: "Mine is a highly disciplined profession; the idea that the theater is an arena for the open and free exercise of ego and temperament is entirely untrue. I think it takes me a long time to lose my temper. But equally, having lost it, it takes me a long time to regain it."

Even with all the media attention attendant on her candidacy, her private life is a quiet affair, not secretive but just ordinary. She shops in her local shops and supermarkets, just as she has always done. She regularly sees her three sisters and her mother back in Cheshire. Her real friends are not fellow professionals but "people I don't have to explain myself to, people I've known for years." She likes to tend to her garden, and her only luxury is buying books.

Her unaffected image will no doubt go down well with the voters of Hampstead and Highgate. If they choose her as their representative at Westminster, they will be getting a formidable workhorse with a dedication to the job. As she puts it: "You can't be a part-time MP any more than you can be a part-time actress." □

SHOPPING GUIDE

Page 38: Three-button single-breasted wool suit, $1,745. Lumberjack plaid silk shirt, $605. Giorgio Armani, NYC and Beverly Hills. Demi-chaffe calfskin shoe, $465. J. M. Weston, NYC. Leather belt, about $60. I. Magnin, Beverly Hills; Marshall Field's, Chicago, Dallas. **Page 40:** 100% cashmere turtleneck, $450. N. Peal Cashmere, NYC, San Francisco. Hand-carved court jester walking stick with antique ivory head, malacca shaft, leather trim, and gold end tip. Circa 1860. $4,235. Paul Stuart, NYC. **Page 41:** 100% cotton T-shirt, about $70. Comme des Garcons Boutique, NYC; Riccardi, Boston; June Blaker, Chicago; Maxfield, Los Angeles. Silk scarf, $75. I. Magnin, Beverly Hills. **Page 43:** Linen and rayon double-breasted suit, $2,035. Giorgio Armani, NYC and Beverly Hills. **Page 74:** Jodhpurs, $175. Polo/Ralph Lauren, Madison Avenue. Sweater, $1,250. Polo/Ralph Lauren, Madison Avenue, Aspen. Shirt, $195. Polo/Ralph Lauren, Beverly Hills, Madison Avenue. Jacket, $395. Polo/Ralph Lauren, Chicago, San Francisco. Ascot, $85. Select Polo/Ralph Lauren stores nationwide. Boots, $695. Polo/Ralph Lauren, Madison Avenue, Beverly Hills. **Page 75:** Trousers, about $250. Bloomingdale's of NYC; Macy's Herald Square; Dayton's, Minneapolis. Jacket coat, in evergreen only, about $745. Bloomingdale's of NYC; Macy's Herald Square; Dayton's, Minneapolis; Neiman Marcus, Houston, Los Angeles. Overcoat, about $1,295. Bloomingdale's of NYC. Turtleneck, about $205. Macy's Herald Square. Loafers, $275. All Gucci stores. "Allegro" hat, about $155. Worth & Worth, NYC. Pocket square, $35. Sulka, NYC, Beverly Hills, San Francisco. **Page 76:** Suit, about $1,971. Shirt, about $755. Overcoat, about $2,688. Jacket, about $1,402. Gloves, about $320. All at Gianni Versace Boutiques in NYC and Barneys New York. **Page 77:** From Romeo Gigli Men's Fall/Winter 1991-1992 Collection: Shirt, about $247. Vest, about $345. Duffle coat, about $1,483. Tie, about $110. All at Spazio Romeo Gigli, NYC; Charivari, NYC; Neiman Marcus, Dallas; I. Magnin, San Francisco. **Page 78:** Jacket, about $975. Cardigan, about $425. Shirt, about $195. Tie, about $95. Pants, about $425. Boots, about $355. Belt, about $135. All at Bagutta, NYC; Riccardi, Boston; Barneys New York; Ultimo, Chicago; Wilkes Bashford, San Francisco; Maxfield, Los Angeles; Dayton's, Minneapolis. **Page 79:** Jacket, about $1,300. Pants, about $375. Shirt, about $400. Gloves, about $160. Scarf, about $40. Belt, about $200. All at Giorgio Armani, NYC, Boston.

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PHOTO SOURCES

Page 4: (bottom right) Photograph courtesy Keith de Lellis; (left, third from top) John Frederick Herring, Jr., detail from *Sixteen Vignettes of the Sporting Life*, one of a pair; medium, oil on canvas; size, each 16″ x 16″. **Page 25:** Distressed-leather jacket, courtesy Emporio Armani; underjacket, berry red linen, courtesy Paul Smith. **Page 26:** Porcelain cardinal, $395, available at Boehm Gallery, Trump Tower, New York. **Page 34:** Jeff Koons, *Jim Beam J.B. Turner Train*, 1986, medium, cast stainless steel Jim Beam Bourbon decanters; size, 11″ x 9′6″ x 6½″; edition of 3. **Page 37:** (left to right) Cabernet sauvignon, 1986, and chardonnay, 1988, courtesy Gaja; Riesling, 1988, courtesy Trimbach; Pinot Noir, 1989, courtesy Robert Mondavi Winery. **Pages 68–73:** Photographed by J. Stoll. **Page 101:** Photographed by J. Stoll. **Page 103:** Ted Hake has authored the *Encyclopedia of Political Buttons*, which reproduces and gives a price to 12,000 presidential campaign items. For information on these books or Hake's Mail and Phone Bid Auctions, write P.O. Box 1444, York, PA 17405. **Page 104:** (bottom center) Painting by Akos Birkas. **Page 106:** Leopold and Rudolf Blashka, glass model of a spray of orchids, 1891; medium, glass, paint; ©The President and Fellows of Harvard College. **Page 107:** (upper left) Artist and date unknown; Saint Petersburg, poster advertising Treugolnik (Triangle) galoshes, size, 34″ x 21½″; courtesy V.I. Lenin State Library; (right) artist unknown, Moscow, early 1900s; size, 43½″ x 31¼″; courtesy V.I. Lenin State Library, Moscow.

(Continued from page 22)

and lodging from Prince Karl Lichnowsky, as well as an annuity contributed by the prince and the archduke Rudolf. Haydn enjoyed the patronage of the Esterházys for more than fifty years, but when one of the family's young men who didn't care much for music ascended the throne, the composer was paid to twiddle his thumbs until he got bored and departed for London. In the early years of his career, Mozart was required by Archbishop Colloredo to eat with the servants and was eventually kicked out of the house—literally—by the archbishop's steward. And then, of course, Mozart had Salieri.

Ulf Björlin had Ethel Stone. For years Stone considered Björlin her golden boy, whom—she felt—she had plucked from obscurity. When he was first hired, in 1987, Stone advised Fary and the children to go back to Sweden because she felt Ulf would be a greater asset to the orchestra if he appeared single. She seemed uncomfortable with Ulf's independent spirit and took particular umbrage when he decided to work with another cultural group, the Palm Beach Festival, which helped produce the Wallenberg piece. In fact, Björlin asked her to get involved with the project. She not only declined but also became increasingly alarmed as the event was coming—so successfully—to fruition. One month before the work's debut, she was already looking for a replacement for Björlin, according to minutes of a board meeting.

Ever since he moved to Paris from his native Sweden, where he was born in 1933, to study theory and composition with the legendary Nadia Boulanger, Björlin had made his name in the European musical community as a free-lance conductor and a promising composer. He conducted for the London Symphony and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, in London, and had an impressive track record in the recording business, putting out more than fifty albums of symphonies, operas, and concertos.

He also had a fruitful partnership throughout the 1960s with Ingmar Bergman, Sweden's most famous filmmaker and the head of the Royal Dramatic Theatre, in Stockholm. Recognizing Björlin's talent, Bergman hired him as music director of the theater in 1963. During the next five years Björlin conducted and wrote music for forty-five plays—a record in Sweden. Then, in 1977, he came to the United States, where he conducted the American Symphony at the Newport Festival and at Carnegie Hall, and the National Symphony, in Washington, D.C.

In 1987 he was asked to guest-conduct for the Greater Palm Beach Symphony by its then musical director, Joe Conlin. "I hardly knew where Palm Beach was, but I found it to be beautiful, with everything on the island a mere five-minute drive," Björlin remembers. "When Dale Heaps [the orchestra manager, now deceased] offered me a two-year contract, I was thrilled because I wanted to stay in America with its artistic freedoms."

Björlin accepted the $30,000-a-year position (a starting salary that didn't even cover his rent) after being assured that he would be given a free hand to create a small but dynamic orchestra and expand the program to include concerts up and down the south Florida coast.

The Greater Palm Beach Symphony was quietly formed in 1972 by a local musicians union president, Glenn Young, who just wanted to create jobs for Palm Beach members. Not much happened until two years later, when a transplanted Bostonian, Ethel Stone, got involved with the fund-raising. The wife of businessman S. Robert Stone, the sixtyish dilettante had owned antiques shops in Boston and Cape Cod and operated a thrift shop in Palm Beach, which benefited the symphony.

For the past fifteen years, Palm Beachers say, Ethel Stone has singlehandedly brought in the dollars it takes to keep the group afloat. At the same time she has made quite a name for herself locally—several names, in fact, and few of them are flattering. According to John Bryan, the symphony's former public-relations man, she is "one of the most hated women in Palm Beach."

Stone is not known for her musical acumen. Orchestra members accuse her of using the symphony as nothing more than a lonely hearts club and of being ignorant of the arts. In an example cited by the Björlins, one night at their home when a recording of *La Traviata* was playing in the background, Stone asked Fary if that was Ulf's composition. "I laughed and glanced at Ulf," Fary recalls, "and we thanked her for the compliment but explained that it was Verdi's well-known opera. She then asked if Verdi was Ulf's cousin."

Stone once asked if *La Traviata* was Ulf's composition. After the Björlins explained it was Verdi's, she asked if he was Ulf's cousin.

Stone defends her motives and her knowledge. "Despite what you hear about me, I *do* know the difference between a trombone and a trumpet. My father played several instruments."

"Ethel told me her conductor must be handsome and good with the ladies," Fary reports. "When I asked her about his musical ability, she said, 'Oh, that too.' "

Björlin is hardly the first man in this job to have been fired unceremoniously. Every new musical director, Palm Beachers say, has arrived with similar high hopes, but not one has been permitted to stay long enough to accomplish his goal. From 1978 to 1981, John Luele was conductor. Near the end of his third season, he learned rather abruptly that his contract would not be renewed. He read it in a local newspaper. In 1984, David Gray, a talented Englishman, moved south to take the symphony post. But when he accepted a faculty job at the University of Miami, his contract was canceled.

Björlin's Wallenberg project turned out to be the beginning of his own demise. The debate began in 1988 when Björlin asked Stone if the Greater Palm Beach Symphony could perform the work. Stone said no. Later she would say she had two reasons: it was too expensive, and the preparation time would take the maestro away from his regular symphony duties. But at first she offered no explanation, and Björlin was only left to wonder. "She had never heard of Wallenberg," says Ulf. "I

realize now that she has both a problem with being Jewish in Palm Beach and a limited knowledge of the events of World War II" (not to mention the Richard Chamberlain miniseries).

Björlin then asked Stone for permission to present the project elsewhere. She gave her okay, allowing him to remain with the symphony and perform the new work for an organization of his choosing. A local committee headed by Phyllis Shever Girard, who once made videos interviewing Holocaust survivors, raised about $100,000 to commission *Wallenberg* and to pay for production expenses. The Palm Beach Festival, a nonprofit cultural committee unconnected to the symphony, then stepped in to find a venue and to publicize the event. In exchange for its members' work, the Palm Beach Festival would receive the proceeds from the tickets.

As the event gained momentum, becoming the hot ticket of the cultural season, Stone had a change of heart. About a month before the sellout performances, she began advising Ulf and Fary not to go ahead with the project. One of the reasons, she said, was that she was afraid the event would siphon support from future symphony events.

Incensed that Stone would now veto something she had originally approved (and at such a late date), Björlin wrote to the symphony's board of directors, offering to resign. "I cannot understand the resentment for this piece, which transcends religious and national feeling, that could only attract favorable attention, publicity, and glory to our orchestra. To the best of my knowledge, no money has been raised or taken away from the symphony for it. But if the Board thinks I should not conduct the concerts or they are ashamed of taking part in them, I don't think I should continue to be conductor of the symphony orchestra next season. If the Board decides it would rather that I do not continue, I would comply. As a composer I think it most important to finish the work and to perform it."

Stone admits now that she considered Björlin's letter an insult. If he saw it as a gracious offer to resign, she saw it as a rude threat to do so. But she insists that *Wallenberg* had nothing to do with her decision to give the conductor his two weeks' notice.

Although she had told friends earlier in the year that this past season, with Björlin conducting light classics, was the best in the symphony's (then) eighteen-year history, she now says Björlin didn't fulfill his obligations to his employer—and that in itself was cause for dismissal. He spent too much time on *Wallenberg,* she says, didn't rehearse his musicians sufficiently for symphony concerts, and failed to spend enough time socializing with symphony supporters. The minutes of the March 1989 board meeting, she claims, show that Björlin had been on probation since then because of his overall attitude, which discouraged the esprit de corps necessary in orchestral ensembles.

"He knows but denies this," she explains calmly. "He didn't fulfill his position requirements, and he was disrespectful to the symphony by threatening to resign." The symphony gave him $2,000 in severance pay, she adds.

In Björlin's mind, however, there is no question about Stone's true attitude toward him and the Wallenberg work. "She was stupid not to allow the symphony to host it," he says. "She disliked it even more when the piece was successful for another group, and she could no longer control me."

But the subplot thickens. If Ulf Björlin wasn't fired because of *Wallenberg,* maybe he was fired, some locals suggest, because his neighbors didn't like him.

Enter the Polans: Billy, son of a prominent family from Huntington, West Virginia, who had made his money in Kentucky coal and Palm Beach real estate, and his wife, Susan, an ex-stewardess and daughter of a New York plumber. Their yellow ten-room house sits only a twenty-foot hedge away from the Björlins'.

"It's a goddamn nightmare," howls Billy, who says that the Björlins have been the noisiest and least considerate of neighbors. The conductor and his wife gave wild orgies, the Polans say, not to mention late-night pool parties. Herds of parked cars around their house, loud music rehearsals involving opera singers, shouts of unsavory language, and boisterous good-nights on Fary's part are among the Polans' other complaints. The Polans have called the Palm Beach police on several occasions, but reports indicate that the noise next door has never exceeded the acceptable limit. Billy Polan once told a police officer that if they didn't take care of the problem, he would be forced to take care of them "the old West Virginia way"—that is, "give them a good ass-whipping."

Then there was the incident last spring with the Björlins' daughter Camilla. According to Fary, beautiful blond Camilla was visiting from Boston and, upon going out her parents' front door one day, was greeted by a couple she believes to have been the Polans. At that point Fary says she heard someone refer to her daughter as a hooker.

"Sir," Fary said, "what is going on?"

"Sir?" Billy allegedly replied. "Kiss my ass!" Then, according to Fary, Billy Polan pulled down his shorts and mooned them.

Billy denies that the incident ever took place and says he can prove that he was in Kentucky on business then.

Susan, who at first denied her involvement, now admits that she saw a young blonde who in her opinion had the look—in her white outfit and stiletto heels—of a loose woman: "I did say I thought she looked like a hooker."

The Björlins now claim that the Polans have harassed them in numerous ways: leaving dog feces on their doorstep, running power equipment beneath their bedroom window in the early-morning hours, and opening the cage of the Björlins' two pet canaries, allowing them to escape. Billy calls the Björlins "crazy, compulsive liars." Fary calls the Polans "the most vulgar people I've ever met."

Just one week before Ulf Björlin's dismissal, on April 20, the Polans had lunch with Ethel Stone and two other symphony executive board members at the Governors Club in West Palm Beach to discuss putting an end to the conductor's "wild parties." The Polans had been trying to get Stone's attention for some time. Last February, Billy had written her, complaining about the noise. When he hadn't received a reply for several weeks, he left a threatening message on her answering machine. Susan called her the next day, however, apologizing and begging the board chairperson to forgive Billy, who was "just upset."

Although the Polans picked up the check for the aforementioned lunch, they deny having anything to do with Ulf Björlin's unrenewed contract. "I did nothing to instigate Ulf's dismissal.

I know nothing about his musical ability, but he is a lousy neighbor," says Susan. "No one in our family can get any sleep."

Stone backs them up on this. "Not renewing his contract had nothing to do with the Polans," she insists. "I just met them and explained I can't control the noise because I don't pay their rent. It was an unfortunate coincidence that [Ulf's] contract was up May 15, right after [the lunch and] the *Wallenberg* performance."

Björlin isn't buying that, because his million-dollar lawsuit charges sabotage of his contract, in addition to his claims of slander by the Polans.

The news spread fast in this community—and through the same circles in Southampton and Saratoga. As one person quipped, the last thing that swept through Palm Beach at this speed was the notorious 1925 fire at the Breakers.

The press spread the word further, on TV's *A Current Affair,* a PBS special report, and local radio talk shows. Actress Ruth Warrick was so angry that she called her friend Herbert Bayard Swope and asked if she could appear on his Palm Beach radio program to have her say about Ethel Stone.

"I was horrified by that awful woman," says Warrick, "especially after I heard she told Fary she had called Immigration and informed them that Ulf no longer had a contract and their lovely family would be deported.

"I blasted Stone on the air and offered Ulf a contract to compose music for my Manhattan-based production company. I expect big things from him."

The story even made the music columns in Stockholm. "Björlin's *Wallenberg* was an honest, accessible, and professional work," wrote Hans Wolf, music critic of the *Dagens Nyheter.* "I can't understand why he should lose his job over it."

There are people on both sides of the controversy, but in general Palm Beach is supporting Björlin. Anton Gudagno, of the Palm Beach Opera, calls him "a fine conductor, a good musician, and a complete gentleman."

Two symphony board members, Trudye Fogelson and Mitch Kafarski, have resigned in support of Björlin. Although Fogelson, a fifteen-year board member who is a sculptor in Palm Beach and New York, and her husband, David, have given $75,000 over the years to the symphony, she maintains that she was called disloyal because she contributed to the performance of *Wallenberg* as well. "I thought it was fantastic and would ultimately benefit the symphony, which employed Björlin," says Fogelson. "When he was let go so undemocratically—Ethel didn't ask, she told us—I had to go, too."

Kafarski, a Palm Beach and Detroit entrepreneur, agrees. "I left because I love Ulf, his music, and his charisma," he explains. "I may be a businessman, but I have an artistic soul."

Other board members have remained silent, but patron Jerry Heacock, who publishes the influential *Condo News,* insists that, above all, Stone is a "likable, smart, tough, strong, astute businesswoman." He also points out that, with the exception of a $20,000 grant from Palm Beach County, she comes up with virtually all of the symphony's $700,000 budget. (Some would argue that she was spending plenty as well, particularly on very fancy fund-raisers. One postconcert party at Club Colette is said to have cost $55,000, complete with two chefs imported from France for the occasion. As a result, Björlin says, his performing budget was slashed and he didn't have the funds to pay musicians for rehearsal time or to host concerts outside Palm Beach.)

As for the Björlins' lawsuit against her, Stone said, in a deposition last August, "You can't get blood from a Stone." She was basically right. The court ultimately awarded Björlin only a symbolic ten dollars. Shaking her head and complaining that her Cape Cod summer had been cut short because of the legal mess in Palm Beach, Stone also had this comment: "I'm saddened it has all gotten so vicious. And I was so good to Fary and the six kids."

This year a three-person arbitration panel ruled that the Palm Beach symphony must pay the $100,000 it owed the conductor ($50,000 annually for the two years that had remained on his contract). "Naturally the symphony is fighting it," says Björlin.

Meanwhile, his replacement has survived the better part of his first season. But John Covelli, who is also conductor and director of the Binghamton Symphony Orchestra in Binghamton, New York, has kept his job up north and, so far, flies to Palm Beach for performances rather than devoting his life to his new employer as his predecessors had been asked to do. To the dismay of Stone and the Polans, however, Björlin isn't going anywhere. He has applied for U.S. citizenship and has made the decision to stay in Palm Beach, in the same house, composing in the glass-walled studio that overlooks his bougainvillea-draped pool and spending evenings—loud or otherwise—at home with family and friends.

The drama took its toll on him: he lost twenty pounds, friends grew concerned about his health, and he is still worried that the adverse publicity might hurt his royalty income from record sales, which he estimates at $100,000 to $150,000 annually. But his career doesn't appear to have suffered.

Some of his first new projects after his dismissal included working as music director and conductor of the Guild for International Piano Competitions (a seasonal job, in Palm Beach), guest-conducting for orchestras in Miami and Mexico City, making a new record in Sweden, and working with Ruth Warrick on a piece about Mikhail Gorbachev. Almost immediately he had projects scheduled for performances at New York's Cathedral of St. John the Divine and in Charleston, at South Carolina's Spoleto Festival.

And everyone seems to want *Portrait of Raoul Wallenberg.* Inquiries have come in from representatives of arts organizations in Los Angeles, Chicago, Washington, D.C., and Israel. Perhaps best of all, Björlin will start a new job this fall, as maestro and music director of the Florida Festival Philharmonic Orchestra, a new incarnation of Fort Lauderdale's Gold Coast Symphony. (This will not mean a move for the Björlin family, however.)

If there is a loser in this ongoing war between money and art, it is Palm Beach. As music critic Juliette de Marcellus notes, it has come to look like "a city of clowns" rather than the creative center it should be.

"With the number of artistic people living here," she points out, "we should have one significant work funneled to New York each year. Ulf was off to a good start. I'm disappointed by Mrs. Stone's decision." □

KEVIN'S CHOICE

(Continued from page 42)

a bartender. It makes a nice, oft-repeated inside story, but it doesn't happen to be true. "This thing follows me wherever I go," Kline says with a laugh. "What happened is that Bill Hurt mentioned once that there's this group called the Bozos, or something, that's supposed to include me and Robin Williams. But I've never been out with any of them as a group. I mean, I love Bill, I love to work with him, I'm friendly with him and Robin both, but we do not hang out. I went out with Robin years ago, and with Bill when we were working together. But because of this story that ran in, I don't know, *Newsweek* or *Life* or *Time,* everyone keeps writing that there's this coterie of friends. And I have been to the Chelsea Central about three times in the past seven years. Lovely place, lovely food."

For the record, the Klines recently settled in upstate New York, and Kevin has many friends who are not in show business. Of those who are, most live in Los Angeles. "I see Steve Martin in New York when he's there, but he lives in L.A. half the time. I also see people like Larry Kasdan and Jeff Goldblum. When John Malkovich and Glenne Headly lived in New York we were all very tight, but then John moved out here, to L.A. I still live in New York, I guess because of the theater, but I'm not enamored of the city, or anti-L.A. It's very pleasant to work out here. I've always enjoyed it and wouldn't rule out having a place here at some point."

If acting is, as Kline observes, the art of forgetting—"You forget that you know what's going to happen, you forget that you know what you're going to say"—it's also the art of concealing art, or making hard-won skills look easy. There's no better example of this than Kline's gift for extravagant physical comedy, which seems as spontaneous as sunshine and turns out to have been anything but.

"I was very stiff when I started acting, and very inhibited physically, even though I'd always been athletic in high school—soccer and football and track. I high-jumped and threw the discus. Not very far, but I threw it." He'd become interested in playing Shakespeare after seeing the movie version of Olivier's astoundingly active *Othello*—"That just blew me away." But the first time he found a way to release himself physically on the stage was at Indiana University. After playing the title role in *Prometheus Bound*—talk about physical inhibition—Kline got the Alan Arkin role of Harry Berlin in Murray Schisgal's comedy *Luv,* which opens with Harry about to jump off the Brooklyn Bridge.

"The character is a completely neurotic wreck, and he was very easy to physicalize; he moved funny, he sat funny, there was this completely physical expressing of his angst. People had never seen it in me, and I had never seen it, it just came out. I remember, when it happened, I thought, 'Well, this is what I've always loved doing.' I grew up watching Jerry Lewis movies, among other things. I also loved the Marx Brothers, and W. C. Fields—he was my favorite. I didn't discover Chaplin until halfway through my college career. Suddenly there was a Chaplin festival, I went and saw those movies, and a whole world opened up—incredible."

Kline unbound at Indiana was a happy man, but that didn't mean he was home free with his newfound physicality at Juilliard. When he first got to New York, his teachers gave him a variety of leading-man parts, along with the role of an eighty-year-old man in *Women Beware Women,* but none of them allowed him to grow, by leaps or bounds, as he'd done in *Luv*. That didn't happen again until a Juilliard production of *The Knack . . . And How to Get It,* Ann Jellicoe's play about three men sharing a house in London in the 1960s. Instead of being cast as the stud, or the inept one, Kline found himself playing the lunatic roommate—Donal Donnelly's role in Richard Lester's frenetic film version—an artist who's constantly painting the walls of his room.

"We would always talk at Juilliard about breakthrough parts, and that character in *The Knack* was mine. Suddenly this physical comedy came out again, and I just sort of cut loose. It was very demonstrative, over the top, but it was funny, and everybody went, 'We didn't know you're funny, we had no idea.' And I said, 'Well, I didn't know either.' "

To appreciate what Kline can bring to a part these days, it helps, in a perverse way, to examine a movie that didn't allow him to bring it: *Cry Freedom,* the 1987 Richard Attenborough epic about apartheid in contemporary South Africa, in which Kline played the newspaper editor Donald Woods opposite Denzel Washington's portrayal of the black activist Steven Biko.

Here were two virtuoso American actors—two certified dazzlers, given the right material—stuck with thuddingly earnest, didactic speeches that would never pass muster on *Masterpiece Theatre* and sandbagged in almost every scene by Attenborough's static direction. Considering the outcome, there's a special, ghastly irony to what the director told Kline after seeing dailies of the first day's shooting: "It's wonderful, the camera adores you, you are perfect, I see absolutely nothing of Kevin Kline!"

Honorable, socially conscious man that he is, Kline says he's prouder of *Cry Freedom* than any other movie he's made. "It's about something important. I wouldn't want to make a career of doing socially relevant movies; they're limited by nature. But I think it's admirable to try to address some burning social issue and not do it as a movie of the week, which seems to be where most of those issues are relegated to." By the same token, he recognizes the movie's dramatic shortcomings as well as anyone. "People kept telling me how they loved my performance," he remembers, "and I'd go, 'Well, I'm really sort of the tour guide'; I'm bringing the audience through the movie, but there's no character there."

The richer the characters that Kline has played, the richer his performances have always been. The *Hamlet* he did at New York's Public Theater in 1986, under the direction of Liviu Ciulei, was a great critical and popular success. He played Hamlet again last year in a New York Shakespeare Festival production that he directed himself, which was later transferred to TV, with a technical assist from the director Kirk Browning, as part of the *Great Performances* series on PBS. "I see every *Hamlet* I can," says Marian Seldes, "and Kevin's first one was mesmerizing. To think that he was even better in the one he directed, well, it was a great leap ahead in his work. It was vulnerable and nonactorish—not Hamlet as an actor, which we often see, and which can be fascinating, but Hamlet as a man in an untenable situation—and it was endlessly interesting as we watched him try to deal with it."

Among his peers, Kline is widely admired for his comic gifts and is seen as a dedicated professional who can be, in the words of John Malkovich, a "fierce, even virulent critic of himself. One would have to fight sometimes to get a good word from him about his work." Malkovich, who directed him in a production of Shaw's *Arms and the Man* at New York's Circle in the Square in 1985, says he had always liked Kline's "elegant sort of stature, and he's very liquid, which is why I wanted him to do the Shaw."

For all his physicality, Kline didn't leap at the offer. "I remember when we were casting," Malkovich says, "he wasn't sure about doing it. Kevin can be really funny—he makes a joke out of being skeptical about things—but I think if you said, 'I'm going to give you this incredibly beautiful Frank Lloyd Wright house,' Kevin would be tempted to say, 'Yes, but how's the neighborhood?' So he said he didn't know, he wondered if he should do it. He played Bluntschli, and he was great.

"He's very skeptical, and very smart. He seemed to me to kind of think everything through quite a bit. It's not that he doesn't go with his instincts, necessarily, but he likes to examine them in a rather rigorous manner before proceeding. I'd like to direct him sometime in something where he's really wild. When he cuts loose, it can be amazing."

By the lights of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, Kline was wild enough, in *A Fish Called Wanda,* to win an Oscar as Best Supporting Actor. His loopy Otto was a combination of dimwit and poseur who had read, though not necessarily understood, Nietzsche and who, coming to orgasm with Jamie Lee Curtis, looked like a blissed-out Moe Howard of the Three Stooges. Originally, writer John Cleese had wanted the character to be brilliant and evil. "John said to me, 'I want you to play the most evil character in the world, and you will eat these tropical fish, and you'll be run over by a steamroller.' And I said, 'Well, that sounds great, I look forward to this.' And that's where he was heading in the first draft. But then when he and I went off to work on it, I thought the character should not be just evil but also stupid; he only believes he's intelligent. I do think my input had something to do with developing Otto's stupidity."

Along with freeing up his physical side so successfully, Kline has learned what many fine stage actors never manage to master in their transition to the movies—how to make the camera an intimate accomplice to subtly shaded, calmly powerful performances. After finishing *Soapdish,* Kline almost immediately began shooting *Grand Canyon,* another Lawrence Kasdan film, which he describes as a drama with comedy in it. "It's a look at what's going on in the American psyche as seen through the parallel stories of a well-off family living in Brentwood—I and Mary McDonnell, and our son—and Danny Glover and his nephew and sister and girlfriend, who live, as it were, on the other side of the tracks."

Kasdan first tapped Kline's calm center almost a decade ago in *The Big Chill.* When Harold, the running-shoe magnate from South Carolina, showed William Hurt around his home and told him, "You know, I live here, this place means something to me, I'm dug in," you believed every word he said.

"There's a huge range in there," Kasdan says. "Later, when we did *Silverado* together, Kevin was a totally convincing gunfighter, graceful and athletic and solid. There's been a kind of split in what he's done. In movies like *A Fish Called Wanda,* he's as funny as anyone we have, even though he isn't treated that way; he's treated as a serious actor who can be funny. What's really been underestimated, though, is his quieter work, and that's where I think he'll be taking off, when people understand just how good he is.

"The thing about Kevin is there's never been any desperation in him," he continues. "He's never felt he was doing the wrong thing or wasn't getting the parts. He has always worked at his own craft, trying to perfect it. He's never had any kind of mania about where he should be or what kind of star he should be or what kind of money he should make. He's just gone ahead and done great work."

In Kasdan's 1990 film *I Love You to Death,* Kline starred as Joey Boca, a philandering pizza maker with an Italian accent that ebbs and flows according to the needs of specific seductions. (One of his conquests, in a nifty, uncredited appearance in a bar, is Phoebe Cates.) By any reasonable standard, the character Joey is an unregenerate swine; no wonder that his wife tries repeatedly to have him killed. Yet Kline makes him irresistible, a monumentally vain earth father who keeps succumbing to his own charms.

While this may not be the quietest performance in memory—Joey bellows when a shout will do—it's first-rate comic acting, right up there with the droll self-ironies of the younger Marcello Mastroianni. It's also a performance that evokes the style of the silents; when Tracey Ullman, as Joey's wife, whacks him on the face toward the end of the movie, he does a little gem of a triple take. Yet the success of the role turns less on extravagant physicality than on psychic heat; this pizza man bubbles with inner life and sizzles with promise for Kevin Kline's future.

And what sort of future will that be? As unconventional and varied, one assumes, as his past. Kline has never made the standard calculations to achieve success, which is why his career is so intriguing, and so heartening in an era of computer-generated personalities. "It's not that I'm against one of my movies being a great big hit," he says. "I think it would be wonderful to be a super-duper star. If I got in that position, I'd probably be worried about staying there, although that's a nice thing to have to worry about. Kevin Costner is a big star, and good for him, I think that's great. He's got the wherewithal to do movies that really excite him, and I'm thrilled for him.

"But you never know what will happen before you do something. *Cry Freedom* was a movie I hoped would reach millions of people, while I thought *The Big Chill* was a small, intimate movie, and *A Fish Called Wanda* an aberration—I wanted to work with John Cleese, thought the process was great, and didn't care about the results. Now I hardly give that sort of thing a thought. I do what I think will be interesting and stimulate me. People say, 'Would you like this movie or that to put you over the top?' And I think, 'But what does that mean?' To be Bruce Willis, Warren Beatty, or Dustin Hoffman? I'm me. Not just little old me, but me. I think I'm doing fine." □

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classically dressed in a conservative light brown suit and a discreet shirt and tie. Like Sandra, he is eager to praise Carlotta's devotion to the palazzo. He produces an album with photos of his mother at tea with Queen Elizabeth and a copy of an obscure book, 394 pages long, that documents the family's history. Lunch is served in the Salotto del Baccigaluppo, a neoclassical room decorated with six paintings by the late–eighteenth-century artist Giuseppe Baccigaluppo that illustrate mythological scenes inspired by Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Andrea Procaccini frescoes on the ceiling showcase vivacious human figures with musical instruments.

Simple yet elegant, the meal consists of a cheese soufflé, roast chicken, artichokes, and fresh fruit. Sunlight reflects in the crystal glasses. A charming homemade bouquet of flowers graces the table, arranged by a servant who has worked in the palazzo for more than fifty years. The Cattaneo Adornos, amiable hosts, discuss the problems their three children have adjusting to the relatively new environment, the local school, and the language. "Their lives were so different in Brazil," says Sandra. "We had a swimming pool, and we collected modern art. Now the children cannot even find their way about the palazzo." In conversation, the Cattaneo Adornos portray themselves as a family in constant motion: besides conducting busy lives in Genoa, they travel frequently—to Brazil for business and family affairs, to visit Sandra's mother in England, and on vacation, especially to ski.

There are no signs that this relatively young couple are in awe of their surroundings. Still, they possess a sense of adventure about the palazzo and are eager to absorb its considerable history. With Marcello's time largely consumed by the family's business activities, the day-to-day upkeep and preservation of the house are Sandra's domain. In the tradition of Carlotta, she has worked to keep the palazzo open to scholars and stays in constant contact with its two resident art historians.

After lunch, Sandra resumes her private tour, moving through the rooms of the piano nobile to the Salone del Van Dyck, where the queen took tea. About forty-two feet by thirty-two feet, it is one of the three large reception rooms designed as showcases in the 1700s. Here hang masterpieces executed by Anthony Van Dyck during his stay in Genoa in the 1620s. According to local history, the Flemish painter took up residence at the palazzo part of that time. The most striking Van Dyck paintings here are *La Dama d'Oro,* which takes its title from the gold brocade worn by a stately woman rumored to be a seventeenth-century Adorno, and *I Tre Fanciulli,* a charming idyll of three proper children and their small dog.

The room also houses the painting that is possibly the most valuable in the family's collection: *Allegory* by Titian and his pupils, representing Venus surrounded by figures of Love, a satyr, and a nymph. For years, the work's attribution was uncertain because of its many overlays of paint. It was not until a major restoration was undertaken in the 1960s that Titian scholars concluded that most of the work could only have been done by the master himself, although lesser aspects, such as the nymph's head and some of the drapery, may have been painted by his pupils.

Three major Domenichinos also hang in the Van Dyck Room: *Martirio di San Sebastiano, Morte di Adone,* and *Apparizione di Cristo Risorto alla Madre.* Here, too, is Peter Paul Rubens's important *Filippo IV,* a full-length portrait of Philip IV painted in 1629.

Often when a painting was commissioned by the Durazzos, the place where it would hang was determined in advance, and its dimensions were specified to keep them compatible with the surrounding artwork. Some purchased paintings were matted so that the frames would be the same size. And, as Sandra adds with a wry smile, "Perhaps some of them were even cut."

The rooms were created as deliberately as the paintings were chosen—a perfect balance of form, color, and texture.

IN THE SALONE DI ACHILLE, AT roughly fifty-four feet by forty-two feet the largest of the palazzo's three main salons, generations of Durazzos feted the cream of the Italian aristocracy. It is dominated by six paintings of Achilles commissioned by Giacomo Filippo II in the early 1700s and painted by Bolognese artists. He employed fresco painters to surround and frame the art, giving the paintings the permanently fixed positions they have maintained ever since. The most compelling work is the massive *Teti che Riceve da Vulcano le Armi di Achille* ("Teti receiving Achilles' weapons from Vulcan") by Giacomo Boni, probably the last of the great Bolognese-school paintings purchased by the Durazzos.

Two of Carlotta's thoughtful additions are displayed here on modest easels: working sketches of paintings in the collection, one by Francesco Monti, *Achille con il Corpo di Ettore* ("Achilles with the body of Hector"), and another, by Valerio Castello, for a painting of *Abramo Visitato dagli Angeli* ("Abraham visited by the angels").

The third major reception room, another forty-two-by-thirty-two-foot space known as the Sala del Reni, is named after the Bolognese painter Guido Reni. It serves as the family's grand dining room. Several of Reni's paintings adorn the walls, including *Apostolo che Scrive* ("Apostle writing") and a sleeping putto. What many consider the best of the palazzo's three Rubens paintings, a portrait of Ladislao of Poland painted in 1625, hangs nearby. An oval Madonna and Child by Andrea del Sarto lures the eye to another wall.

At the same time that Giacomo Filippo II commissioned the Achilles paintings, he purchased a Titian Maddalena that would become the centerpiece of a room named in its honor. The painting is similar to other notable Maddalena paintings by Titian, including one in the Hermitage that differs mostly

in details of the landscape.

Wandering leisurely from room to room, one is struck by Sandra's unpretentiousness. When she doesn't know the answer to a question, she looks it up in the collection's catalog carried under one arm. Or without hesitation, she telephones one of the two palazzo scholars on the premises. The vastness of the collection is such that she feels no need to feign knowledge of its every nuance.

The Sala di Muzio Scevola, the next stop on Sandra's private tour, is roughly the size of the green and red rooms. It is named after Guercino's painting *Muzio Scevola innanzi a Porsenna,* which rules over one wall of this energetic room. The painting immortalizes the Roman general Gaius Mucius Scaevola, who accidentally killed the wrong Etruscan at the gates of Rome.

Not only are the various salons designed for the greatest harmony, but the anterooms between each of them suggest the careful composition of a painting. And so one is not jarred when walking, say, from the Salotto Giallo (Yellow Room), bright with its inviting lemon palette, to the Sala delle Ceramiche (Ceramics Room) with its eggshell-colored walls and gilded, marble-topped tables.

That there exists a Sala delle Ceramiche, a room devoted entirely to ceramics, demonstrates the family's devotion to that craft. Slightly smaller than the grand dining room, it proffers fine European and Asian works, including antique Albissola pieces from points west of Genoa and tureens, dishes, and vases from the factories of Meissen and Wedgwood. The highlight is a Grimaldi service for forty commissioned in 1772 by the marchesa Giulia Durazzo Grimaldi and executed by Chinese craftsmen. This set of sky-blue china decorated with red and gold is believed to be the only porcelain bearing the Grimaldi coat of arms owned outside the reigning Grimaldi family of Monaco, reputed to have come from Genoa, some one hundred miles away.

The chapel, not far from the Ceramics Room and beside a small room untouched since Matilde used it as her bedroom, is a tiny, stark space where generations have gathered—sometimes to marry, sometimes to mourn. Within its walls lies yet another treasure: an assortment of clerical robes that, Sandra confides, remain to be cataloged.

That task—almost as endless as it can be thankless—has yet to be completed in the Biblioteca, overflowing with the family's rare-book collection. Its shelves shelter thousands of religious, scientific, and legal manuscripts and more than 400 illuminated manuscripts—many dating to the fourteenth century. One work, acquired in the eighteenth century by the ever-watchful Giacomo Filippo Durazzo, perhaps the palazzo's most ambitious collector, dates back to the 1500s and was dedicated to Pope Leo X.

Sandra relates that scholars have found the family's voluminous records invaluable in their cataloging expeditions. Generations of Durazzos have preserved practically everything the family ever wrote, from records of art purchases to more mundane enumerations of household expenses. (A historical footnote is written on one centuries-old ledger: "Today three paintbrushes were purchased for Van Dyck the painter.") Together they make up a virtual history of Genoa. One can find references to an honored family member who as ambassador to Constantinople was responsible for initiating Genoa's commerce with the Orient. Or read about a woman named Clelia, whose villa in Pegli was given to the city to become one of Genoa's great botanical centers. And the records reveal that the Durazzos built and sold a number of palaces, including one that was chosen by the Savoias, the Italian royal family, as the royal palace of Genoa.

Among the family's treasures is a sword that once belonged to Boabdil (el Rey Chico). Local lore has it that the sword was given by Queen Isabella to a wealthy Pallavicini in 1492 to express gratitude for his loans to her government—the loans, of course, that helped finance Columbus's trip to America.

IF THIS GRAND PLACE HAS A CREDO, IT is that all who live here revere and care for the palazzo—and contribute something of their own to it. Matilde Giustiniani, her hand-picked heir, Carlotta, and, in turn, her son, Marcello, though unrelated by blood to the original Durazzos, nonetheless have their own illustrious histories. The Giustinianis count doges, cardinals, philosophers, theologians, and men of letters among their ancestors. In the sixteenth century, eighteen Giustiniani men were honored by the Catholic church because they chose to die painful deaths rather than relinquish their faith. These records, too, have become part of the family inventory.

The palazzo's fortunate residents will inevitably learn that the burdens of history can mute the blessings of today.

Every generation of residents is taught that, more than goods, it has inherited a history and culture. A Genovese scholar has written: "As you walk through the palazzo, you are constantly reminded that it is a family place by the many portraits dispersed around. The palazzo is not only important as a cultural artifact or a museum, but as a celebration of the past. . . . It is like a living organism."

That characterization becomes inescapably clear as the long tour of the palazzo nears its end. Sandra's guest will be whisked to the airport by a decidedly unliveried family chauffeur. Back outdoors, dusk seizes the loud, narrow streets of Genoa, where the old harbor shows few signs of its noble past. The Durazzo Pallavicini palace, that living organism, extends a lifeline to the region's headier days. As for tomorrow, its fortunate residents will inevitably learn that the burdens of history can sometimes mute the blessings of today. □

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office, "I am Lisa Schmitz." Bauermeister shot her a blank stare. "I told you I don't have time to discuss this with you," she said, and Schmitz replied simply, "Yes, I know. That's why I'm here." Bauermeister glared at her for a moment and then laughed, and when she saw Schmitz's proposal, she said within ten minutes, "Lisa, it's exactly the project we need. When can we get started?"

So Lisa returned to Moscow with the backing of the Karl-Hofer-Gesellschaft, a cultural institution, and the Berliner Festspiele. Remembering the frosty attitude of the Union of Artists, she went to the newly formed Cultural Foundation, which wrote a letter of recommendation to the union. The union, however, would cooperate only if it could choose a new, bureaucratically acceptable list of Soviet artists. Lisa then went to the Ministry of Culture, where her right to choose artists was sustained in principle. But when she submitted her list, the director of the ministry turned purple with fury. "Two or three of these are all right," he said, "but the rest are simply out of the question." He refused to do more than write a recommendation—"if you want one for this project of yours that will never take place." Lisa left without it. "Excuse me," she said, pausing at the door, "but the project *will* take place."

While the bureaucrats shuffled Schmitz's papers, perestroika was beginning. A new law was passed: Westerners could invite individual Soviet citizens to make private visits. Schmitz determined to use this new law to get the artists and their work out of Moscow; but when at last the papers were in place, the artists themselves were afraid to register at the police stations they had so assiduously avoided for decades. "We had all indulged Lisa in her crazy fantasy that we would travel to the West," one of them explained. "But suddenly she expected us to become involved in this lunatic dream of hers, and since we knew it would never happen, we wanted to avoid getting into trouble."

By this time, Schmitz and the artists knew one another well. Everywhere she felt at home, and as she lived among them, they began to understand life in the West. Her connection to the Soviet network from the inside allowed her to understand their art more clearly than anyone had yet done. She was able, with time, to make these meanings accessible to the West. The Jolleses may have discovered a few artists; Sotheby's may have seized the moment; but Lisa Schmitz started the trains of thought that would validate that movement, that would give it the international acclaim it has since received.

The Sotheby's sale was built on ground laid by Horne, Jolles, and Schmitz. By the time preparations for the sale were revving up, gallery exhibitions in the West were taking place, notably in New York at the Phyllis Kind Gallery and at Ronald Feldman Fine Arts. There were a few serious collectors of Soviet art, but though it was no longer an eccentric taste, it was still a cultivated, obscure one. When Simon de Pury, private curator to the great collector Baron Thyssen before taking over as director of Sotheby's Europe, traveled with the baron to the Soviet Union, he had picked up word of the contemporary-art scene. He later saw the exhibitions organized by Claudia Jolles. He also gathered that in the Soviet Union there was a great deal of important work by the avant-garde of the twenties as well as wonderful eighteenth- and nineteenth-century furniture and objects. He was eager to set up good business relations with the new glasnost government so that when financial straits pushed it into selling these treasures, Sotheby's would be in a favored position. Lenin had sold some of the best works from the Hermitage to underwrite *his* new government, and Gorbachev might do the same thing. The contemporary art was a glorified bargaining chip.

When he proposed the Moscow sale to Sotheby's, Simon de Pury saw that the contemporary art could be valuable in itself. He is a tense, equivocal figure, entirely poised but, unlike the Sotheby's English directors, radiating involvement, passion, and humor. He negotiated with the Ministry of Culture and the rest of the Soviet bureaucracy with the determination of Horne, the tact of Jolles, and the energy of Schmitz. The sale of contemporary art included a number of important works—including major pieces by Alexander Rodchenko, Varvara Stepanova, and Alexander Drevin—from the twenties as a sort of preface. "Wait and see how long it takes before we have an office in this country saying 'Sotheby's Moscow' over the door," one of his colleagues remarked.

I went to Moscow in the summer of 1988 to attend the Sotheby's sale of Contemporary Soviet Art, to write about the rabid attention that surrounded it—a hype that seemed out of keeping with the art one had heard about. Sotheby's was organizing the ultimate Soviet tour, a package involving diplomatic entertainments, singing Gypsies, and seats at the sale; endless viewings of rare icons and meetings with important persons; cases of imported champagne and Beluga buckshot ordinarily reserved for czars and commissars. We were not going to a mere auction but to an important event in the history of East and West. The glory was reflected in the price—$3,975 (not including air fare).

On a drop-dead-smart brochure, the word Sotheby's blazed red in Latin and Cyrillic type against the sienna tones of an ancient map with illegible lettering. Charmed though we were by the prospect of caviar and views of rarely seen icons, we were somewhat taken aback to discover that this map—the logo of the trip, reproduced time and again in the international press—was actually an old map of Bermuda. "It's what sprang to hand," one of the Sotheby's directors told me.

The Sotheby's people were impeccable to the point of tragic grandeur. The three at the helm were Grey Gowrie (the Right Honorable Earl of Gowrie), chairman of Sotheby's; Julian Barran, director of Sotheby's Paris; and Simon de Pury. Gowrie—who a few years earlier resigned the post of minister for the arts because "one could not live on £30,000 a year"—gave the proceedings an air of authenticity by patronizing everyone alike, whether famous, infamous, or unknown. Julian Barran oozed charm, but the mind behind the operations was clearly that of Simon de Pury, and it was he who conducted the sale.

The night of July 7, 1988, brought together people no previous circumstance could have assembled. Simon de Pury said to me, "This is all a wonderful, giant risk. We know so little about this work we are buying—except that we know it's worth buying." At 6:30 the Sotheby's tour members began to

file into the great conference chamber of the Mezhdunarodnaya Hotel. After stopping at the registration desk to collect paddles, each couple walked to their reserved seats at the front of the room. Elton John's manager, Robert Key, exchanged pleasantries with the sister of the king of Jordan. A retired baseball player escorted a small bevy of titled Scandinavian ladies. A group of prosperous German women, dressed all in red in honor of the host country, engaged in cheery banter with a member of the U.S. State Department. "Are you really going to buy that one?" someone asked. "At any price," came the chuckled response. A thin woman with diamonds at her throat and an oversize crocodile handbag flipped back and forth between two pictures by two different artists. "I just can't decide, I can't decide," she moaned, and asked a neighbor, "Which of these do you like better?"

Behind the people from the Sotheby's tour came Westerners resident in Moscow and certain powerful overdressed Soviet citizens. The American ambassador, Jack F. Matlock, was there, with his wife, his son, and his son's Soviet fiancée. The sons and daughters of wealthy foreign businessmen stationed in the USSR were there. Many had lost the habit of Western social events and welcomed this as an occasion to sport Adolfo and Valentino. Who the Soviets present were was difficult to say, but they looked fat and easy among Americans abroad and Western Europeans on holiday. The press was there in spades, with notebooks, cameras, and TV equipment—not art press flown in for the event but political press, everyone's Moscow bureau covering a day in history.

In the back third of the room there were no chairs. The space was cordoned off by velvet ropes, and in it was crowded all the rest of invited Moscow, people with cards that had been sold and passed around, it seemed, at amazing prices, cards for which we were led to believe paintings and houses had perhaps been exchanged. Behind the velvet ropes were the curators of the Pushkin, the friends of the Soviet artists, the other members of the vanguard. Some artists from Leningrad had come; one artist's cousin had made the trip from Tbilisi, over 1,000 miles away. People pushed and shifted toward the front of the mob only to be borne back again on the waves of people pressed against people, crushed but redeemed by the blissful air-conditioning in mid-July—not exactly a staple of Soviet life.

At seven o'clock the bidding began.

LENIN HAD SOLD SOME OF THE BEST WORKS FROM THE HERMITAGE TO UNDERWRITE *HIS* NEW GOVERNMENT, AND GORBACHEV MIGHT DO THE SAME THING.

Lord Gowrie and Julian Barran were on either side of the podium, like little twin kings, and Simon de Pury, perspiring despite the air-conditioning, was standing behind it, conducting the sale as though he were the master of ceremonies at the greatest show on earth. The work from the twenties far surpassed its anticipated prices; one painting by Rodchenko, *Line,* estimated at $165,000 to $220,000, sold for $561,000.

With lot nineteen the sale of Soviet contemporary art began. The artists were in alphabetical order—alphabetical in the Latin alphabet. So the first was Grisha Bruskin, a tiny, gnarled Jewish man who had been at the periphery of things for years. He was a man deemed sweet and technically capable but to whom no one had ever paid much attention. All his paintings doubled, tripled, quadrupled their high estimates; then one of them, estimated at $32,000, sold for $415,700.

The artists began to look at one another sharply. They were finally getting to see how people from the West spend money. With casual, almost weary gestures, the members of the Sotheby's tour raised paddles of blanched wood into the air, offering six-figure sums. A difference of a thousand dollars seemed to move them not at all. Fortunes such as many of these artists had never dreamed of were casually handed over for a painting—a Soviet painting. The artists saw now that they might be inconceivably wealthy.

After Bruskin came Ivan Chuykov, a highly esteemed elder statesman of unofficial art. If someone would pay $415,700 for a painting by Grisha Bruskin, then surely the work of Chuykov would be worth millions. But *Fragment of a Fence* failed to reach its low estimate of $15,000, and *Noughts and Crosses* didn't reach its low estimate of $20,000. The paintings sold barely exceeded their reserves. And so the sale continued, with high prices that to the Soviets were inexplicable and low prices that were embarrassing. Glances were exchanged when a remarkably pretty but essentially decorative painting by Sveta Kopystyanskaya came on the block; she was a serious woman and a good painter, but not a great original, and the bidding for her work was going higher and higher. How could it be? If the vanguard had not been sequestered behind the rope, they might have noticed that there was a paddle battle going on. Had they been at the posh official dinner the night before, they might have heard a glamorous Swiss woman announce that she would have that painting at any price and have gathered that Elton John had instructed his manager to bid on it. After the sale, the artists repeated in a sort of uncomprehending drone: "That painting realized $75,000; does that mean that people from the West think Sveta Kopystyanskaya is a better painter than Chuykov? Than Kabakov?"

Almost every painting sold. The sale brought in $3.5 million, as opposed to the optimistic estimate of $1.3 million to $1.8 million. Simon de Pury hugged Sergey Popov, deputy director of the Ministry of Culture, and there was festivity in the air. One woman exclaimed to another as they left the great room at the Mezh, "I bought this one," pointing at her catalog. "Or else this one. I don't remember which."

"Whichever," said her friend. "As long as you have something to remember tonight by. Wasn't it exciting?"

The prettiest paintings, or sometimes

the most blatantly unusual works, sold for the most money, and though some of the best work was sold to people who understood it, most went to people who were shopping for souvenirs. The devastating imbalance of the Moscow art scene's infrastructure that resulted from the sale is still resonating. If artists such as Kopystyanskaya and Bruskin had not sold work for such inflated prices, the traditional hierarchy that placed greater importance on more original artists would not have been shattered.

While the bidders' ignorance is not the fault of the auction house, had the sale been staged less theatrically, some of the souvenir shoppers would have stayed home. But then again, the paintings would not have brought such enormous sums. And if the sale had not been such a blockbuster, the Ministry of Culture would have been far less likely to stage the other events along these lines that have helped liberate all Soviet artists in the last three years. Another plus for the once-detested artists was that the ministry began looking at them with increasing kindness as a prime source of hard currency.

Sotheby's saw all these truths. The auction house knew it was tapping a new source of continuing profit but at the same time transcended its usual pedestrian commercialism. At this sale, even the profit-seeking seemed to spring from a commitment to the general good. At the farewell dinner, the day after the auction, the thrill of having created history brought even the most cynical of the Sotheby's staff—and the most skeptical officials in the Ministry of Culture—to the brink of tears. It was a miraculous engagement for two sides that had long stood in emblematic opposition to each other, and if one accepts that the function of art is ultimately communication, then this sale was itself a work of art. Whatever the misapprehensions and blunders surrounding it may have been, Sotheby's acted throughout with that elusive and in some ways very Russian quality of integrity. For that it deserves the world's praise.

What about the artists themselves? They were brought into the public eye, a frightening place to be if your life is based on privacy. The easiest thing to lose sight of when a work is cut off from its origins is its irony. The Sotheby's buyers and the Western press were almost blind to that profoundly significant aspect of the work they confronted, and their blindness became an issue for the artists. How do you deal with people who come not to decode entangled acts of communication but to judge works by their aesthetic and conceptual successes? For Soviet art, insistence on the multiplicity of truth is as political as the act of painting, because accepting a single, easy truth is an old Stalinist habit. It is the nature of elusiveness—rather than the thing eluded—that must be the focus of criticism. This is why sociological examination is the most rational way to proceed. It is valid, in short, to applaud the brilliance of disguise; it is comical to applaud the disguise itself.

A PLUS FOR THE ONCE-DETESTED SOVIET ARTISTS WAS THAT THE MINISTRY BEGAN LOOKING AT THEM WITH KINDNESS AS A PRIME SOURCE OF HARD CURRENCY.

So began a process of redefinition. Since the sale there have been thousands of gallery exhibitions and dozens of museum shows. While some artists have sunk into obscurity, others have grown accustomed to life in the jet set; they have been invited to the homes and palazzi of collectors and have had dinners thrown in their honor in apartments at Trump Tower in New York. Their work has been mentioned regularly in the local and the art press, but even when it is unpopular, they themselves are often popular. They have appeared on morning television shows and been profiled in glossy magazines. They know everyone, go everywhere, show in the best places. The best of their work depends on the certain knowledge that the West can understand, if not individual acts of communication, at least the will to communicate.

In their finest works these artists are not so enthralled by the new as to believe wholeheartedly in progress. That they have looked forward to a certain celebrity with cautious ebullience has never meant they have given up on nostalgia or are beyond bitter reflecting on what is past. The poet Elizabeth Bishop, in *Questions of Travel*, wrote: "Think of the long trip home. Should we have stayed at home and thought of here? Where would we be today?" The works of art by these now famous and well-traveled artists are at their best responses to that very question. They are about realizing an impossible dream of travel that, like all fantasies, has lost much of its charm in the realization. What is the difference between the place imagined and the place discovered?

The poetics of meaning for these Soviet artists still lie in their nostalgia, and it is perhaps a greater mercy than they realize that among their cultural attributes is a tendency to be homesick. It is when they are able, in their work, to think of the long trip home, to recognize that a dream realized is in the end a dream forsaken, that they resuscitate both their purity of purpose—the much-vaunted urgency of communication—and the sense of humor that we in the West find so moving. Time and inevitable failures have restored to these artists the capacious self-reference that operated so effectively in their work in the pre-auction days. In rediscovering their country and their lives of oppression from a salutary distance, they have rediscovered their original reasons for telling, secretly or otherwise, what they perceive as inalienable truth; the strength of their beliefs in the end convinces us. Truth-telling is what distinguishes this work and gives it its high moral and aesthetic standing. That is why much of it sits so comfortably, today, in the major museums of the world, why its prices are leaving the realm of the speculative and entering the arena of hard values. These truths are a gift the artists offer not only to collectors but to the world beyond them. □

ARMS AND THE MAN

(Continued from page 67)

American gun manufacturers were not pleased when Cummings began importing boatloads of surplus weapons from abroad. Interarms easily undersold such manufacturers as Colt, Winchester, Smith & Wesson, and Remington, which organized under a trade group called the Sporting Arms and Ammunition Manufacturers' Institute. Their goal: to lobby Congress to outlaw the importing of military equipment, chiefly to thwart Interarms' sales. It took several years, but in 1968 Congress outlawed both the sale of American military surplus weapons and the importing of military surplus, a move that still didn't save most American gun manufacturers from dying.

That meant Interarms could import only antique weapons (like the pair of 1871 bronze Austrian cannons in one corner of an Interarms warehouse) or newly made sporting guns. The law, however, did not address the guns that kill most Americans, the "Saturday-night specials," which Cummings abhors and has never sold.

Today, because of the 1968 legislation, Interarms in Alexandria mostly handles the wholesaling of sporting weapons—hunting rifles and target pistols; the military hardware is stored and shipped from the company's Manchester facility.

"Curiously and paradoxically, true peace is the only time we can do serious military business," says Cummings, who jokes about his profession by calling his headquarters "the devil's smithy" and by signing communiqués with names like Strangelove or Captain Plunder. "In times of tension, all private arms business is stopped or blocked in favor of covert or overt action on the part of governments—the Iran fiasco was a perfect example."

Cummings has nothing but professional contempt for the machinations of Oliver North, Richard Secord, and their cronies. Not because they were dealing with the dreaded Iranians but because their middlemen were part of a vast league of eager deal makers operating with thin portfolios.

"Look," says Cummings, "you shake a tree in Belgium, and a chap will fall out offering to either buy or sell armament. He usually doesn't have anything, but he's a broker. The same applies to certain Asian countries. Thailand, for example. Lean against any palm, and it's not a coconut that'll fall out; it's some Thai offering to buy or sell weapons."

Cummings did not know Gerald Bull, the Canadian inventor of the long cannon who did business with Iraq and was found murdered in his Brussels apartment.

"That's another world," says Cummings. "That's a wild card—he was always into these crazy projects. In the real world, it really doesn't add up to anything; it's just too bad for his family. For better or worse, we consider ourselves 100 percent legitimate, licensed traders. We don't hide anything; we don't go around with secret deals. Good luck to the others, but include us out, as Sam Goldwyn used to say.

"We don't consider these people serious. Usually they confuse the situation by running around, and when they hear of a deal, they offer it to everybody. The trick is to get past these people and deal with the man—the minister, the general, or the head of state—who can say yes or no."

The next trick is to get the British or Americans to issue the end-user certificate that will allow Interarms to export weapons. Why tolerate the bureaucracy? If Cummings is willing to sell to anyone regardless of what color hat they wear ("Or no hat at all—we don't require hats as evidence of good faith in purchasing," he says), why be constrained by the foreign-policy whims of England or the United States?

"Years ago we had the idea—why don't we buy a big surplus freighter, load it up with arms, and just sail around the world?" says Cummings. "Buy here, go over there, and sell. It wouldn't cost any more to run it than to run our land depots, and we'd be free agents. Then we were politely reminded that the torpedo was invented. And that's what would happen if we tried to go it alone—the big governments would give you a headache."

Cummings became a British citizen nineteen years ago when a Supreme Court decision (not involving him) threw into doubt the nationality of his Monaco-born daughters; if he had died, they would have been stateless. His daughters have since acquired dual British and American citizenship (by attending college in the United States), and the IRS hasn't collected any personal income tax from Cummings since he made the citizenship change and established residency in Monte Carlo. But Cummings likes to joke with friends that he can "pass as an American anywhere."

Often, the first reaction of people who learn Cummings's profession is one of horror. Here, behind a plain suit and a self-deprecating sense of humor, is a merchant of death in the mold of the notorious Sir Basil Zaharoff, the agent for Vickers (the huge British armament manufacturer) who made his fortune selling weapons during World War I. Like Cummings, Zaharoff lived in Monte Carlo and was famous for his willingness to sell guns to anyone—or even to both sides in the same conflict, as he is suspected of having done during the Boer War.

It is a reaction that Cummings hardly seems to notice anymore.

"If I thought there was a moral dilemma to my business, I wouldn't be in it," he insists. "The knife I used to butter my toast for breakfast this morning is just as capable of killing you as any of our weapons, but it doesn't have any character in itself. It's the use or misuse that determines whether it's a *good* knife or a *bad* knife.

"What causes wars? The proliferation of weapons or the attitude of society or certain individuals? I don't want to fall back on handy slogans like 'Guns don't kill people; people do,' but like all popular slogans, it has a grain of accuracy in it. If it were true that if we banned all weapons, crime would stop, I'd be the first to agree on banning all weapons. But if we don't sell weapons, someone will. And if there are no weapons to sell, people will make them."

To a number of people, that argument just doesn't hold up. One of them is Anthony Sampson, author of *The Arms Bazaar,* published in England in 1977. "This view is not really supported by the history of the business," he wrote. "The great surges in arms sales [were primarily a result of] economic pressures that dictated the rush of American weapons into the Middle East, and the scale of the arms race could have been very different if Nixon had said no to the Shah."

The arms business, Sampson notes, has always insisted that it is "like any other business, with no special moral

responsibility," and the complexity of modern weapons does make it easy to forget their ultimate purpose. But the arms trade *is* different from other trades, he insists, as are two other examples he chooses: "narcotics and slavery."

"The gun trade is not benign or banal," agrees Patrick Brogan, who, with Albert Zarca, wrote the 1983 biography of Cummings, *Deadly Business*. "There is a mystery and a danger about it that Cummings tries constantly and vainly to dispel."

These authors lay at least some of the blame on public reaction, or lack of it, to these deeds. "The accumulated crimes of the century have so deadened our senses that the . . . deadly business of equipping millions of men to kill others is now a matter of routine," they wrote. "Few people are scandalized by Sam Cummings, as once people were scandalized by Krupp and Basil Zaharoff. Untold thousands of Americans have presumably been killed over the decades with weapons he has supplied." But it's all perfectly legal, they point out, and "society—at any rate in America—sees no harm in it."

This fits in with Cummings's bleak view of the world and its inhabitants, which is unfortunately borne out by history. Even arms-control agreements don't impress him. "All weapons," he likes to say, "are defensive, and all spare parts are nonlethal." And "the plainest print cannot be read through a solid gold sovereign." Translation: There's always someone willing to deal for the right amount of money.

Interarms is privately owned by Cummings, who will, if pressed, acknowledge gross sales of at least $100 million annually. It's dwarfed in size by government-to-government arms sales, of course. His is the secondary market, and the pattern of trade moves with the tide of history.

The countries of the Middle East and Latin America were fertile markets for Cummings once upon a time. But the superpowers now decide who gets what in the Middle East, and the Latin American nations are broke—"They want 1,000 years of credit with no interest and no money down." Business is still coming from Southeast Asia—Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines. Cummings's biggest deal with Indonesia was made in 1961 and '62, when Sukarno was in power; Interarms sold him $60 million worth of guns and ammunition.

Cummings says his most recent military-arms deal was with Sri Lanka, equipping that country's motor torpedo boats with fifty-caliber machine guns and mounts to fight incursions from India by rebels. The guns were bought from the British Royal Air Force in the 1960s, and Interarms engineers in Manchester retooled the guns for use by the Sri Lankan Navy.

If Cummings can't get the abandoned weapons from the Iraq-Kuwait battlefields, he would be just as happy acquiring another cache of arms that he has coveted for almost two decades: the nearly $5 billion in weapons that the United States left behind when it withdrew from Vietnam.

To Cummings, those weapons, many still in their original boxes, represent a kind of Holy Grail, the largest unspoiled lot of surplus arms of the last two decades. He recites the list of treasures like a litany: more than 500,000 M-16s; 250,000 M-14s, M-1s, and other rifles; 60,000 45-mm automatics; 30,000 Smith & Wesson and Colt revolvers; at least 10,000 light machine guns; 10,000 heavy machine guns; mortars; hundreds of millions of rounds of ammunition. The existence of those weapons has taunted and tempted him for years.

"Thirteen years ago I met in Paris with Le Duc Tho, North Vietnam's peace negotiator," says Cummings. "I suggested Interarms manage the disposition of the weapons. He said, basically, 'Don't call us, we'll call you.' "

For years, Cummings puzzled over why the Vietnamese, who needed foreign currency more than guns, weren't trying to peddle the weapons. Finally, a couple of years ago, Interarms was invited to inspect the weapons and open discussions about liquidating them.

"In 1990 the former head of our British office, Hamilton Spence, spent two months in Ho Chi Minhville," he notes. "We have agreed on a price and have an accord in principle with the Vietnamese government."

But there's one problem: the American government won't approve the deal. The weapons aren't technically U.S. property anymore. Cummings has pointed out that he's not an American citizen and that Interarms of England is a separate corporate entity. But according to Cummings, the Office of Foreign Assets Control in the Treasury Department isn't impressed by his pleadings.

"They say, 'You were born in America, you have a large facility here, so in our opinion, you'd be better off working with us than otherwise.' There's really no answer to that," says Cummings, "nor can one afford to fight it."

So Interarms works to keep the Vietnamese from selling off the lot in smaller parcels to other free-lancers in hopes that American officialdom will get over what Cummings thinks is a "sore subject. Psychologically, it's sour grapes. They can't bear the thought that they had a debacle in Vietnam in every sense of the word and left behind the largest stock of American arms that was ever left anywhere at any time in any war.

"But the real way to look at it is, it's going to be sold. If the Americans don't want to buy it back—which, incidentally, would be a pretty good deal, and I've told them we'd handle that for a one percent commission—they ought to let us buy it. If we don't get it, it will go to some other no-goodnik and will not be disposed of according to U.S. policy. We'd bring it back to England, where we have ample room, take whatever steps are necessary to put it in first-class condition, and remarket it under British licensing wherever we can."

Already Cummings knows he has missed business opportunities. During the Iraq conflict, an Allied country involved in Operation Desert Storm contacted Interarms in search of 10,000 M-16 rifles. If Cummings had had that Vietnam cache, he could have filled the order.

Such are the regrets of an arms merchant. But then Cummings remembers his own advice, that he can "always rely on human folly—it will never cease, and its depths will never be plumbed." Which means somehow, somewhere, the opportunity to buy or sell guns will come again.

"We stagger on," he says with philosophical resignation, "never knowing what tomorrow's fax, mail, telex, or telephone will bring. We only know it will bring something, and it will be another reflection on the folly of our times, as indeed was the madness in the gulf. Which, as Bismarck probably would have said, wouldn't have been worth the bones of a single Pomeranian grenadier." □

Valuations

THEY PAINT HORSES, DON'T THEY?

Centuries have passed since the British first went to the races, rode to hounds, and commissioned artists to preserve those moments on canvas. Today, sporting paintings represent one of the art market's most stable investments.

by Jerry Patterson

HUNTING, SHOOTING, AND FISHING WERE MORE THAN sports to the British gentry from the late eighteenth century to the Second World War; they were, long before the word was coined, a life-style. Society in the country—and the upper classes spent more time in the country than in town—revolved around race meets, fox hunting, and deer stalking. In the exquisite country places they built, they hung a permanent record of their sporting exploits by commissioning artists to portray their racing champions, their pink-coated hunts, their favorite hounds. Private patronage by dukes and simple country gentlemen inspired an immense school of painters whose works are still avidly collected.

Although sporting paintings depict a variety of activities—racing, fox hunting, coursing (the pursuit of game with gazehounds, which follow by sight rather than scent), stalking (hunting deer on foot), angling, cricket, and even croquet—it was the noble horse and horse sports that attracted most of the patrons and most of the major artists.

In the late nineteenth century, economic changes forced the sale of many country houses and their collections, and the market for sporting paintings thrived. There has always been an undeniable snobbery about collecting them. Their elegance and association with nobility have always meant that the new rich would sooner or later collect them. What better way to associate oneself with the gentry than by buying a Sartorius or a Stubbs?

After the First World War, there was an explosive revival of interest in sport and in sporting paintings, partly out of nostalgia for Britain's golden age before the war. Horse races drew larger crowds than ever, the number of fox hunts increased, and new collectors, largely sportsmen and -women, spent more money than ever on paintings by the great British sporting artists. You paid more for a painting by John N. Sartorius than for a Monet, much more for a John Frederick Herring, Sr., than a van Gogh. Britain was the center of collecting, but in the U.S. rich horsey types began to assemble collections. On the whole the Americans bought the same artists as the British. Collectors were guided by the two books published at the time by Walter Shaw Sparrow: *British Sporting Artists* (1922) and *Angling in British Art* (1923), still classic reference works.

During the depressed 1930s the prices of sporting paintings dropped sharply, although they held up much better than British ancestral portraits or French Salon paintings. A corps of devotees continued to buy. After the Second World War, prices slowly revived until the 1960s, when there was a sudden surge upward. The market was encouraged, or distorted, depending on how you looked at it, largely by the buying of an American named Jack Dick, who began to compete recklessly with established collectors like Paul Mellon—whose outstanding collection is now in the Yale Center for British Art—who had been quietly supporting a conservative market for years.

Dick was a Wall Street operator, whose Black Watch Farms sold Angus cattle to doctors in an intricate tax scheme. He bought most of the fine British sporting paintings that came on the market, dozens of them at prices hitherto unknown. His empire, fraught with charges of fraud, forgery, and abandoned cattle, collapsed in 1973. He died the following year amid a welter of lawsuits led by the IRS. Even before his death, Sotheby's London began selling his collection in a series of auctions in collaboration with the office of the U.S. marshal. The first sale, in October 1973, saw some sensational price appreciations. George Stubbs's *Goldfinder*, a portrait of a handsome dark bay stallion in a landscape with a mare and foal, for which Dick had paid $212,000 in 1966, sold for $540,000. Later sales, during the recession years 1974–75, did not fare so well, but overall the market showed strong, and since then there have been only temporary retreats. Today, airline mogul Carl Icahn and financier Henry Kravis are among sporting art's more visible patrons.

Among the hundreds of British sporting artists, a few have attracted collectors for two centuries. The first great name was that of John Wootton (1682–1765). Like many of his successors, he settled at the racing center of Newmarket to paint portraits of racehorses commissioned by their owners, beginning a lasting tradition of patronage. Many experts consider his paintings naive and uneven in execution. He has a relatively modest place in the market; a good many of his works have sold in recent years for under $50,000. Only the exceptional work brings more—*A Huntsman on a Grey Thoroughbred Stallion with Hounds* at $319,000 in 1985, for example.

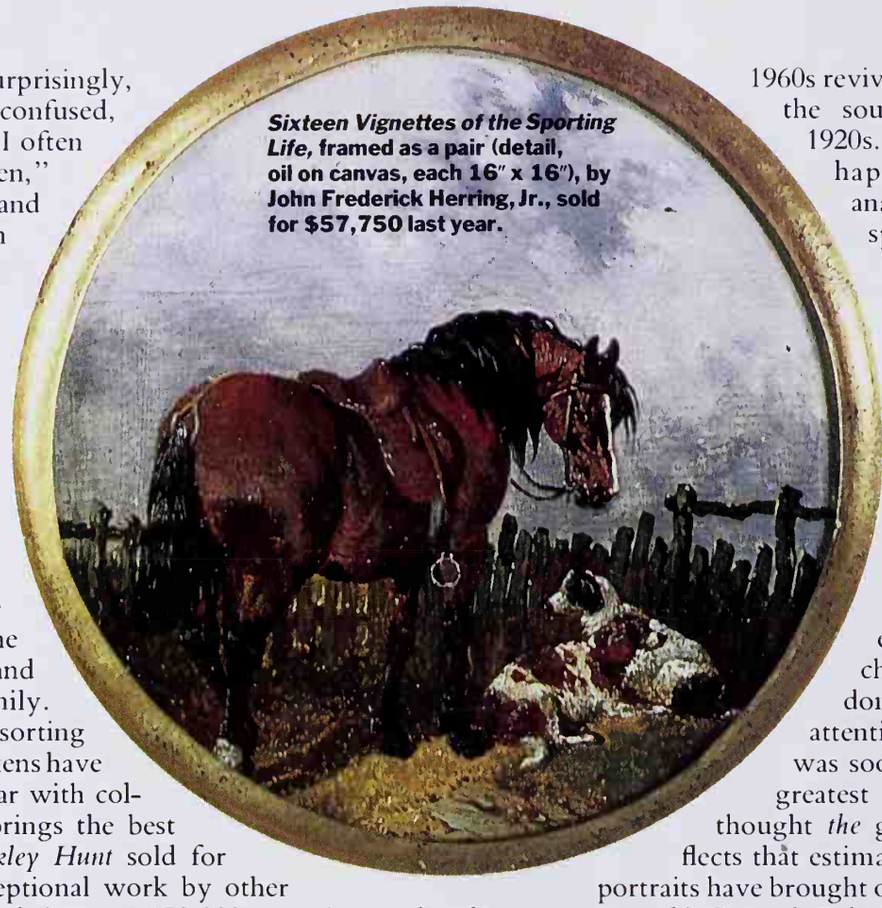
Ben Marshall (1766–1835) was not very highly esteemed during his lifetime and was not elected to the Royal Academy, but since then his work has been rediscovered and revalued three times, in the 1890s, the 1920s, and the 1960s. Comparatively rare, his major portraits of a single horse or a hunter with his mount can bring upwards of $500,000. Workaday pictures bring much less, about $30,000 to $50,000. Marshall

Horsing Around: George Stubbs, perhaps the finest of all British sporting artists, painted *Tristram Shandy* (oil on canvas, 40″ x 50½″) in the 1760s.

was also a good writer on sporting subjects; his vividly written articles appeared in the famous *Sporting Magazine*, bible of the sporting set, between 1821 and 1833.

Many of the great sporting painters of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries belonged to dynasties of artists. The Sartorius family, for example, consisted of John N. Sartorius (1700–80), his son Francis, and his grandsons, both confusingly named John—John N., Jr., and John Francis, who were painting up to the 1830s. John N., Jr. (1759–1828), is generally thought the best, and his prices reflect this. In recent years his many portraits of racehorses have sold for about $50,000, with the occasional especially fine example passing $100,000. The work of his relatives is generally cheaper, their racehorses selling for about $20,000 to $30,000.

Another artistic tribe was the Alkens: Samuel Sr. (1750–1815), his sons Henry Sr., who early in his career used the name "Ben Tally Ho," Samuel Jr., George, and Seffrien, and Henry's sons Samuel Henry and Seffrien II. The Alkens were painting hunting, shooting, and coaching scenes from the late eighteenth to the nineteenth century—Samuel Henry didn't



***Sixteen Vignettes of the Sporting Life*, framed as a pair (detail, oil on canvas, each 16″ x 16″), by John Frederick Herring, Jr., sold for $57,750 last year.**

die until 1894. Not surprisingly, their work has often been confused, especially since Seffrien II often signed his works "S. Alken," like his grandfather, and Samuel Henry often signed his "H. Alken," to pass his work off as that of his more skillful father.

The Alkens did not work only in oils. Their pictures were often engraved by themselves and others, and they did numerous pencil drawings with a little watercolor. Experts claim to be able to distinguish the works of this complex and extremely prolific family. Despite the difficulty of sorting out their work, all the Alkens have been and are very popular with collectors. Henry's work brings the best prices: in 1989 *The Oakley Hunt* sold for $143,000. Only the exceptional work by other members of the family can bring over $50,000 at auctions and a great many sell for under $10,000.

The best known of the Ferneley family of painters is John Ferneley, Sr. (1782–1860), but his sons John Jr. and the improbably named Claude Lorraine Ferneley were also sporting artists. Senior settled early in his career at the hunting and racing center of Melton Mowbray in Leicestershire, where he painted portraits of racehorses on commission from their owners and, occasionally, the gentry.

Ferneley Sr.'s prices began to rise in the late 1960s and have remained solid: auction sales of over $100,000 are not uncommon. Junior, although he is believed to have collaborated with his father on some pictures, lags far behind, in the $20,000-to-$40,000 range, while poor Claude Lorraine rarely gets above $10,000.

At least six members of the Herring family painted sporting pictures. The most famous was John Frederick Sr. (1795–1865), who for decades painted the winners of the Derby and St. Leger races and other equine portraits. He also turned out a remarkable number of barnyard scenes—not truly sporting pictures—in which, typically, a workhorse in a stable benignly gazes from his stall on chickens, goats, and ducks in the yard. There is plenty of demand for both the sporting scenes and the barnyards, but the market draws a sharp distinction in price: *Chestnut Hunter with Cat in Stable* sold at auction in 1988 for $10,700, but several racing scenes brought around $500,000. *Preparing to Start for the Doncaster Gold Cup, 1825* sold for $730,000 the same year. John Jr.'s work rarely makes more than $30,000, and many dozens of his paintings fetch below $10,000. The work of both is far from rare on the market: in the 1989–90 auction season, twenty-two works by Senior and thirty-one by Junior were sold.

The reevaluation of George Stubbs (1724–1806) by both academe and the market was one of the phenomena of the 1960s revival; he had not been one of the sought-after artists in the 1920s. He was fascinated—perhaps obsessed—with the anatomy of the horse and spent years in a remote farmhouse in Lincolnshire dissecting dead horses with the assistance of a strong-stomached lady friend. He was highly paid in his lifetime and was still painting and selling at the age of eighty, but his work was largely forgotten for a century. A great exhibition at the Whitechapel Art Gallery in London in 1957 directed new attention to his work, and he was soon regarded as one of the greatest English painters, some thought *the* greatest. The market reflects that estimation: several of his horse portraits have brought over $1 million at auction; the current record is *Baron de Robeck Riding a Bay Cob* (1791), sold in 1960 for $60,000 and in 1987 for $2,420,000.

British artists have continued their study of the horse and horse sports into our own time. It is generally agreed by collectors that Sir Alfred Munnings (1878–1959) was the greatest sporting painter of the century. Of horses he wrote, "They have been my supporters, friends—my destiny in fact." He followed racing closely and claimed to have seen more than 1,000 starts at Newmarket. His characteristically horizontal oil paintings—many on board rather than canvas—are noted for their verve and especially for the artist's treatment of clouds and shadows. He also worked a great deal in watercolor.

Munnings was well rewarded for his lifework: for many years he was the most expensive living British painter and was almost as popular in the U.S., where he painted many pictures beginning with his first visit in 1924. Throughout the 1980s his prices rose steadily in the range from $100,000 to $300,000. The first Munnings to bring more than $1 million was *Start at Newmarket: Study No. 4*, which sold in New York in 1987 for $1,210,000. Watercolors of sporting scenes run $30,000 to $60,000.

Two British twentieth-century sporting artists much more accessible to the average collector are Lionel Edwards (1878–1966) and Cecil Aldin (1870–1935). Both worked almost exclusively in pencil and watercolor in the tradition of the Alken family, turning out numerous scenes of hunting, steeplechasing, and polo matches, as well as horse and dog portraits. Edwards is the more expensive today: his lively drawings and watercolors can sell for up to $30,000, although many are $3,000 to $5,000. Aldin's prices are much lower, about $7,500 tops.

American artists lack the grand tradition of the country house and ducal patronage of sporting art, but they have

painted a wider variety of sport, including big-game hunting and the ball sports, and have been particularly adept in this century at shooting and angling scenes.

The most notable American horse painter of the nineteenth century was Edward Troye (1808–74), whose portrayal of race winners and blood stock generally have more historical than aesthetic merit. His best paintings bring $20,000 to $30,000, but quite a few sell for under $10,000. *Mambrino Patchen in an Extensive Landscape* sold in 1988 for $8,000.

Arthur Fitzwilliam Tait (1819–1905) was English-born but came to the U.S. in 1850. Like many sporting artists, he had a long, productive career (note the life spans of many of these artists; painting *en pleine air* may be healthful) and great success during his lifetime. Dozens of his scenes of hunting, shooting, and fishing were engraved by Currier & Ives and sold by the thousands under the advertising slogan "Pictures have become a necessity." Most of Tait's paintings are rather small—eighteen by twenty-four inches is typical—and hang well in present-day rooms. A nice Tait of game birds or a doe with a fawn, one of his most frequent subjects, can be bought at auction for under $10,000. Large oils are often $20,000 to $30,000. The current record for his work is *Duck Shooting*, which sold in 1987 for $418,000.

Arthur Burdett Frost (1851–1928) specialized in watercolors of shooting scenes. A good test of his market came in the autumn of 1989 when the collection of the late Campbell's-soup heir John T. Dorrance, Jr., was sold at Sotheby's New York. He owned thirteen watercolors by Frost, most depicting hunters with game birds or dogs. Their average price was about $45,000; the most expensive was *Fall Woodcock Shooting*, which sold for $85,250. These prices were realized at the height of the art boom of the late eighties.

More recent American sporting artists much in demand include Carl Rungius (1869–1959), who painted moose, elk, Dall sheep, and other big game. Major oils sell at auction for upwards of $50,000, but a good many are available for $10,000 to $20,000. Ogden Pleissner (1905–83) is a great favorite with sportsmen for the accuracy of his paintings and watercolors (his more usual medium) of shooting and, especially, angling. Especially popular are his scenes of fishermen killing salmon (salmon are "killed," not "caught"). A good Pleissner watercolor can be bought for $30,000 to $50,000. Both artists illustrated books and made many prints.

Today, the collecting of sporting paintings is very much alive. Taken as a whole, it is a conservative field, without the startling price fluctuations of the Impressionists and contemporary art or the constant reattribution of old masters. With the English-country-house look so in demand these days with collectors and their decorators, the future of sporting paintings seems stable, and good examples are likely to be a sound long-term investment. □

READING CROP

When sportsmen aren't pursuing game in field and stream, they are likely to be reading about it in their libraries. Sporting books are widely collected, and they are so numerous that specialization is almost required: entire libraries devoted to the horse sports, big-game hunting, or angling have been assembled. Fox hunters delight in the novels of Robert Smith Surtees, written between 1838 and 1864. *Jorrocks's Jaunts and Jollities*, with hand-colored plates by Henry Alken, relates the misadventures of an amiable London grocer in the hunting field. A first edition, dating from 1838, sells for around $750. Surtees wrote six more sporting novels, which are usually sold as a set for around $1,500. Edith Somerville and Martin Ross, two Anglo-Irish cousins, wrote fourteen fox-hunting novels (several made into a *Masterpiece Theatre* series in recent seasons) at the turn of the century. With one or two exceptions, first editions are available for under $500.

The contemplative aspects of fishing have led to an immense literature both by and about fishermen. The earliest book, *Treatyse on Fysshynge with an Angle* (1496), was written by Dame Juliana Berners, a fourteenth-century English nun, and published after her death. The first edition is one of the rarest books in the world; no copy has appeared for public sale in decades. The most popular fishing book of all time, and many would say the greatest sporting book ever, is Izaak Walton's *The Compleat Angler*. Walton was a London ironmonger who retired to Winchester to write pious biographies and fish. Literally hundreds of editions of *The Compleat Angler* have been issued. The 1653 first edition, even in imperfect condition, sells for $15,000 to $20,000. Other seventeenth-century editions with additions by Walton's fishing companion Charles Cotton sell for around $1,000 to $2,000.

American sporting writers, like American sporting artists, have tended to emphasize shooting. Henry William Herbert, who wrote under the name Frank Forester, produced a long series of field

Angler Saxon: Augustus Fox's illustration from an 1860 edition of Izaak Walton's *The Compleat Angler*.

sketches in the 1840s and 1850s. First editions in good condition run from $100 to $300.

Several American private presses have specialized in sporting books. Preeminent is the Derrydale Press, which between 1926 and 1941 printed handsome editions limited to fewer than 1,000 copies but often with a further "deluxe" edition limited to fewer than 100 copies. It reprinted classics such as the Frank Forester books and the Somerville and Ross novels and published new titles, often illustrated by noted sporting artists. Prices vary widely: standard editions are $200 or even less, but the deluxe editions may sell for $1,000 to $5,000. The most expensive are those on fishing, a few copies of which contain flies specially hand-tied for insertion in the book.

STAR QUALITY

Collectors of the Stars and Stripes pledge more than mere allegiance to the flag. They preserve the very fabric of history.

by Andrea DiNoto

COUNTING STARS IS A PREOCCUPATION WITH FLAG BUFFS, whether they are examining tiny jeweled lapel pins, full-fledged star-spangled banners, or the stunning flag motifs found on any number of artifacts—from quilts to postcards. The reason: American flags can be dated by their stars. They signify the states in the union, of course, and so place the flag in its historical context. But beyond that, any version of the Stars and Stripes conveys a powerful patriotic message that stirs complex emotions.

For Robert Banks, a Maryland graphic designer and collector, the American flag is a unique blend of aesthetics and history. "You look at a thirty-four-star flag—that's a Civil War flag—and you know that's the only American flag that never saw a day of peace." Banks began to collect fifteen years ago when he discovered that the American flag has existed in a surprising variety of designs since the late eighteenth century—all based on the stars-and-stripes motif.

During the Revolution, America produced flags "as various as the troops were motley," according to one historian. But in 1777, the Flag Resolution—a brief and ambiguous statement—mandated "that the flag of the United States be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the Union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation." Because there were no instructions for the proper configuration of stars or their shapes—they could have four to eight points—"new constellations" proliferated as inspired flag makers freely improvised dozens of elegant variations, such as wreath and "great star" patterns. (The notion that the flag's design was based on George Washington's crest and arms and executed by Betsy Ross has been discredited by historians, but flags with thirteen stars arranged in a circle or wreath are still referred to as a "Betsy Ross design.") Not until 1912, when New Mexico and Arizona joined the union, were design standards mandated, under President Taft, for the new forty-eight-star flag—six even rows of eight stars. Thus, the starry free-for-all was brought to an end. On July 4, 1960, under President Eisenhower, the arrangement of the contemporary flag was fixed with fifty five-point stars in nine horizontal rows.

For flag collectors like Banks, it is the star patterns and "distinctive irregularities" of old, hand-sewn flags that give them a folk-art dimension. One of his prize flags has nineteen crudely cut and stitched stars. "It had sixteen stars to begin with," says Banks, "then three were added, squished in at the bottom, to update it to 1816–17—the nineteen-star period."

Ohio collector Thomas Rentschler is always looking for unusual star arrangements. One of his favorite flags, bought sight unseen by mail auction for $375, turned out to be from the Civil War era, with stars arranged as a "giant star." Civil War flags are among the most sought after, both by flag collectors and Civil War buffs, for their historical associations. Rarest of all from this period are authentic Confederate flags, which can cost thousands of dollars. But fakes abound and claims by sellers that holes and stains were made by bullets and blood are usually spurious.

The number and arrangement of stars can be a clue to dating a flag. A useful chronological list of "Official American Flags and Their Stars" may be found in *The Stars and the Stripes*, a rare, out-of-print illustrated history of the flag. But Rentschler cautions that counting stars can be misleading. Many early thirteen-star flags were made later on as commemorative items for centennial celebrations. "Flags with fewer than thirty stars are extremely rare," says Banks. "Fewer than twenty-six are virtually nonexistent."

While military flags rank highest in prestige and price, any early flag with impeccable provenance "has star potential," says Banks. Few come with reliable documentation such as written histories or even photographs, and oral histories are suspect. For this reason, dealer Joel Kopp of America Hurrah, the noted folk-art shop in New York, was thrilled to find a large four-by-seven-foot gold-fringed flag with an American eagle that had been presented to one of Custer's Indian scouts in 1901 on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the battle of Little Bighorn. It came directly from the scout's family, which had kept it until 1988, and its history included a worn snapshot of the scout, White Man Runs Him, holding the flag in front of his teepee. Such a flag, documenting the tragic Indian-war era from 1860 to 1885, has tremendous historical value. It is one of the ironies of history that the flag has been so creatively appropriated by Native American craftspeople for weaving and beadwork. Very rare Navaho "wearing" blankets, woven as a flag, are among the most costly and sought after of flag collectibles. Like the traditional striped chief blankets, these sell for five-figure sums.

Among the most stunning examples of American folk

Above: **An exquisite clip of eighteen-karat gold with rubies, emeralds, and diamonds from Van Cleef & Arpels.** ***Right:*** **A pressed-felt fireman's parade hat, circa 1840s.**

Stirred Up: This rare circa 1905 Campbell's-soup advertisement was soon withdrawn by the company after complaints that it was a misuse of the flag. ast year, it sold for $93,500 at auction. *Below right:* An 1896 presidential campaign badge features a portrait of William McKinley.

textiles are nineteenth- and twentieth-century flag quilts. The collector Milton Brechner discovered them about six years ago at an exhibition of patriotic quilts at America Hurrah. "I have always been very patriotic," says Brechner, "and I have always loved my wife's quilt collection, so I was delighted to discover the phenomenon of flag quilts." President of a toy-manufacturing company, Brechner has acquired some thirty-six examples of the pieced and appliquéd designs.

The flag has provided numerous artists (such as Jasper Johns), institutions (such as the U.S. Post Office) and organizations (such as political parties and corporations), and of course jewelry designers with provocative, eye-catching, and soul-stirring imagery. However, blatant commercialization was frowned on long before 1923, when patriotic groups adopted a flag code, which dictated the way the flag should be used and honored. Signed into law in 1942—though not strictly enforced in every detail—it declares that the flag "should never be used for advertising purposes . . . nor be embroidered on such articles as cushions or handkerchiefs." The public pressure such attitudes exerted on an advertiser at the turn of the century created a modern collector's dream. Last July, Richard Oliver's auction in Maine sold a forty-by-twenty-six-inch embossed tin Campbell's soup sign for $93,500. The rare item, made around 1905, is a "flag" created with rows of Campbell's red-and-white-striped soup cans, now aptly nicknamed "the Warhol flag tin." It is said that Campbell's withdrew the sign in response to complaints that this was an inappropriate use of the Stars and Stripes. Few had been produced, and so a retro Pop Art rarity was born—waiting for today's collectors.

Flag lapel pins are the most manageable form in which to collect the Stars and Stripes. Very desirable are rhinestone Trifari pins designed as wind-blown banners with thirteen stripes and forty-eight stars, which may date them to as late as the forties and fifties. Even more elegant are flags of rubies, sapphires, and diamonds from fine jewelers like Van Cleef & Arpels. While a sparkling, gem-encrusted pin may be judged by how closely it resembles the actual flag, it is well to count karats instead of stars when making a value judgment. Pin collections often include political items, notably the 1896 McKinley/Hobart flag brooch that opens like a tiny book to reveal the candidates' portraits hidden inside—collectible, surely, as a quaintly reticent artifact of the pre-sound-bite era.

Rarities aside, flags and some surprisingly inexpensive flag-related items may be found at estate and Americana sales and at auction. However, the most profitable approach is to network with members of the North American Vexillological Association (NAVA) (see Sources), where collectors and flag historians exchange information.

Most generic, undocumented late-nineteenth-century flags are priced well under $1,000, many under $500, while widely available items, such as a forty-nine-star flag, though not rare, are highly desirable—and affordable. "Identified flags of historical significance are in a different, much higher price range," says Banks. Political items (lapel pins, badges, etc.) may be had for no more than a few hundred dollars, ephemera for under ten dollars. On the other hand, flag quilts, especially if they are dated, can fetch four- and five-figure sums.

With flags flying at Americana sales around the country and flagmania intensifying, Milton Brechner predicts, "It's going to be quite a Fourth of July." □

SOURCES

Dealers. Americana dealers nationwide. See ads in antiques newspapers (*Maine Antique Digest; Antiques And The Arts Weekly*), the magazine *Antiques*, and exhibits at major Americana shows.

Americana shows. Summer: Brimfield Antiques Shows, Brimfield, Massachusetts (three times a year: May, July 4 weekend, September); Hancock Shaker Village Show, Pittsfield, Massachusetts (August). **Fall:** Home in Indiana, Indianapolis (September); Star of Texas, Houston (September); Connecticut Antiques Show, Hartford (October); Fall Antiques Show, New York (October). **Winter:** Rye Antiques Market, Rye Brook, New York (December); Pilgrim to Pop, New York (January); Bucks County Conservancy Show, Jamison, Pennsylvania (February). **Spring:** York Antiques Show, York, Pennsylvania (March); Heart of Country, Nashville, Tennessee (March); Philadelphia Antiques Show, Pennsylvania (April); American Classic Antiques Show, Washington, D.C. (May); Greater York Antiques Show & Sale, York, Pennsylvania (May).

Specialized dealers. Civil War: See *Civil War Times Illustrated* for shows and sales; dealer, mail order: Dale C. Anderson Company, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, 717-334-1031. **Political:** Hake's Americana & Collectibles, York, Pennsylvania, 717-848-1333.

Books. *The Flag Book of the United States*, Smith; *Thirteen Star Flags: Keys to Identification*, Cooper; *All Flags Flying: American Patriotic Quilts as Expressions of Liberty*, Bishop and Houk; *So Proudly We Hail*, Furlong and McCandless; *The Stars and the Stripes*, Mastal (out of print).

Association. North American Vexillological Association, 1977 North Olden Avenue, Suite 225, Trenton, New Jersey 08618.

War Baby: This thirty-four-star silk flag (ca. 1861–1863, 18" x 28") is the only flag of the Civil War period that failed to fly in peace.

galleries

Painter Pál Gerber in his Budapest studio.

THE HUNGARY ARTISTS

IF YOU TRAVELED TO BUDAPEST LOOKING FOR INTERESTing art in the 1980s, you probably ended up feeling chagrined. Until the recent political changeover, "official" art was the norm and galleries were largely controlled by the state. The select group of government-sanctioned artists seemed to specialize in only two subjects: folklore scenes of toothsome peasants rollicking in the fields, or kitschy sunsets over the *puszta* (Hungary's "great plains"). Although this work still abounds in what is left of the dusty state-run galleries, it is slowly being supplanted by the art of a younger, less constrained, and decidedly more hopeful generation of artists.

Austrian gallery owner Hans Knoll brought the first post-Communist art outlet to Budapest last year, converting a dark and dingy flat into a pristine showcase for emerging artists. Unfortunately for Knoll, sales have so far been slow and the local response muted. "The small class of nouveaux riches in Hungary would rather buy a new car or a house, not art, and especially not contemporary art," Knoll says with exasperation. So far, most of his sales have been to museums and Western art-lovers attracted by the comparatively low price tag on Hungarian talent.

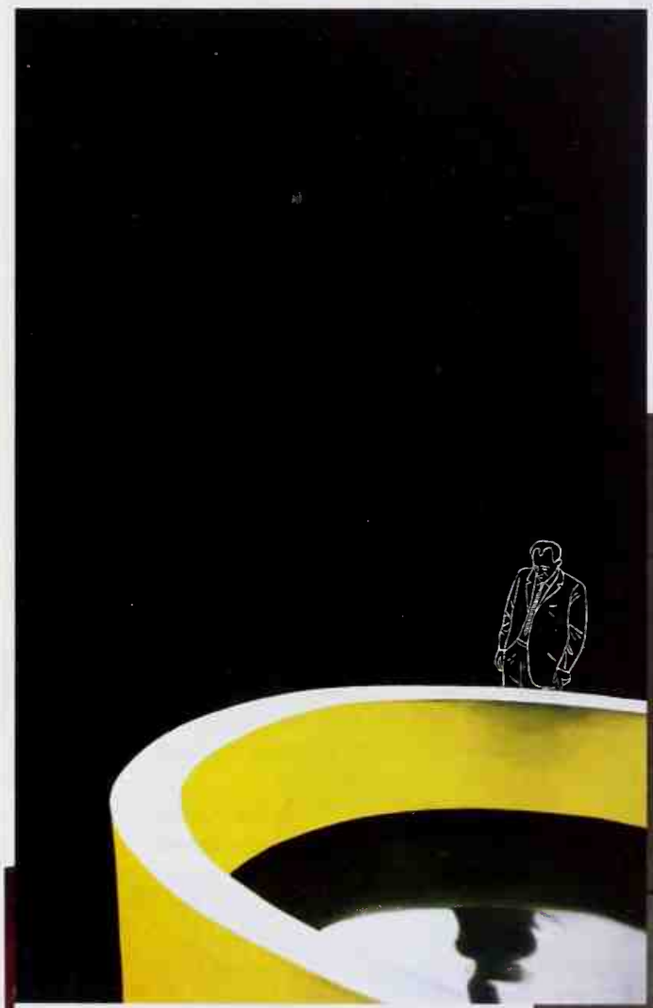
Today, Hungarian painters, many of them educated at the esteemed Budapest Academy of Fine Arts, experiment freely with a variety of styles. András Bernát, a thirty-three-year-old painter, shows at the Knoll Gallery. His meditative canvases—filled with shifting light, lush color, and abstract forms—are currently finding favor with Austrian and Swiss collectors. László Fehér, a young artist who represented Hungary with a solo show at last year's Venice Biennale, takes a more representational approach; his paintings feature people dwarfed by grotesque Stalinist cityscapes.

For those Hungarian artists who have passed beyond traditional painting and sculpture into more avant-garde activities, the Na-Ne Gallery is the venue of choice. Director László Rajk, a member of parliament who is also an architect and a sculptor specializing in deconstructivist works, has exhibited computer-made sheet music by modern composers and displayed samizdat literature as works of art.

With commercial rental space hard to come by as the property market is privatized, art-world entrepreneurs are claiming any corner or empty broom closet as an impromptu gallery. Victor Menshikov, a Soviet émigré to Hungary, operates a private art agency from his home in the Buda hills. Károly Szalóky's cellar is now the small Mühely Gallery, where painter Pál Gerber shows. His paintings transform such images as an ax slicing through wood into ominous symbols of an inhuman social order.

Sparking interest in art as an investment may prove to be a long-term endeavor, Hans Knoll believes. Until Hungarians are sated with electronic gadgets and other such Western "necessities," foreigners will have to prime the local art market. Hundreds of them turned up—including thirty-five top French museum officials—in March for the Budapest Art Expo, the first Western-style art fair to be held in Eastern Europe. In true free-market fashion, artists rented their own stands and pegged their prices in hard currency, hoping to turn a profit with direct sales. Not many pictures found buyers, but the prospect of Budapest becoming an Eastern European art center quickly spawned a second fair in June, exclusively for Eastern European and Soviet galleries. Perhaps the future will see a new Soho develop on the banks of the Danube. —*Ernest Beck*

Knoll Gallery, Liszt Ferenc tér 10, H-1061 Budapest



Above: **László Fehér,** ***Man Looking into a Well*** **(1990, oil on canvas).** ***Right:*** **Austrian art dealer Hans Knoll opened the first Western-style private gallery in Budapest last year.**

Salon Style: *Left*, Louis-Léopold Boilly, *L'Entrée du Jardin Turc* (1812, oil on canvas, 29½" x 37"). A recently rediscovered masterpiece. *Above:* Old-master dealer Guy Stair Sainty.

BOILLY BASE

OLD-MASTER DEALERS HAVE A TOUGH ROAD TO HOE. NOT only do they draw their clients from a very small pool of committed collectors but they also have to recognize the undervalued paintings at such carefully scrutinized events as auctions and estate sales. A dealer in this field must convince clients that he offers them a privileged eye, able to see in an instant the bright pigment underlying centuries of grime, or the master's touch in a canvas previously dismissed as derivative.

Time after time, Guy Stair Sainty has proved himself such a discerner of quality. One of the preeminent U.S.-based dealers in seventeenth-, eighteenth-, and early-nineteenth-century French and Italian painting, Sainty specializes in works depicting a lost world of social artifice. "Lately, I've been focusing on paintings with subjects taken from modern literature and history rather than antiquity," says Sainty, bright yellow socks peeking out from the bottom of his Savile Row suit, sitting at his eighteenth-century *bureau plat* in his Manhattan town house.

"Guy has the zeal of a reformer," says Alan Wintermute, a former assistant to Sainty and now a director at Colnaghi's in New York (a gallery that often works in concert with Sainty to buy particularly high-end paintings—such as the *Portrait of Hyacinthe Gabrielle Rolande, Countess of Mornington* [1791], by Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun, recently purchased at a Christie's auction for $781,000). "Where many dealers follow what is popular, Guy looks for uncharted territory—then sets about convincing people that these are important areas." Sainty has already helped establish a market for once-neglected eighteenth-century French historical paintings, and he has also found success with painters of contemporary genre scenes.

With Patrick Matthiesen, Sainty sold a magnificent work by Louis-Léopold Boilly (1761–1845), a contemporary of David and one of the leading salon painters of his age, to collector Jayne Wrightsman nine years ago. Sainty and Matthiesen presently own another Boilly, *L'Entrée du Jardin Turc* (1812). The work depicts a crowded park in Paris's Marais district, which Boilly, a shrewd social observer, uses as an opportunity to capture all of the different levels of Parisian society together in one instant. On the left, for example, a gentleman strolling with a courtesan is accosted midstride by a street urchin. On the right is a self-portrait of the artist, seated and wearing glasses. "Boilly was absolutely the best genre painter of his time," says Sainty with pride, noting the "porcelainlike finish" of his surfaces and the range of characters revealed by his brush.

Patrick Matthiesen says of his longtime affiliate: "He has the gift of the gab, which I lack. Where I'm considered notoriously difficult, Guy is very good at leading people by the hand."

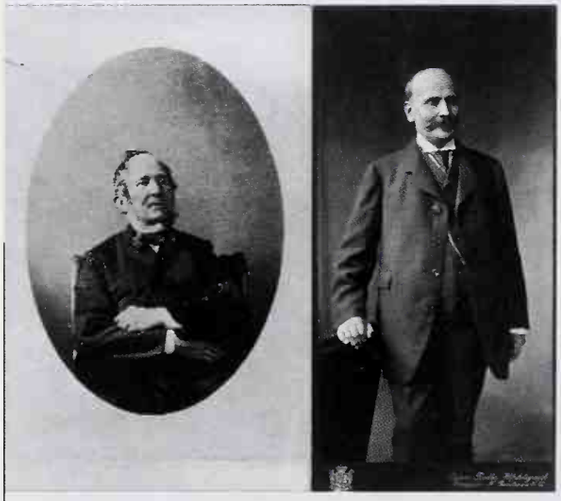
In conversation, Sainty's tutoring instincts quickly become apparent. "Collectors must realize that when you buy an old-master work," he says, "you are buying a piece of history."

Stair Sainty Matthiesen, 42 East 74th Street, New York, NY 10021 —*D.P.*

GLASS MENAGERIE

GENIUS TAKES MANY FORMS, BUT THE FATHER-AND-SON team of Leopold and Rudolf Blaschka shared a particularly unusual kind of aesthetic brilliance. Between 1863 and 1936, these Bohemian craftsmen created minutely detailed models of flowers and marine animals—made entirely out of glass. Their unique creations, ranging from pollinating bees to sea cucumbers to a series on the life cycle of common moss, are currently on view at the Corning Museum of Glass.

Working near Dresden, the Blaschkas developed a mastery of the technique of lampworking—a glass-shaping process that involves softening rods of glass over a flame, then molding them with such simple tools as pincers and tweezers. Museums and universities bought their models of sea creatures, including squid, jellyfish, and anemone, for an average of three dollars each through a Rochester, New York, scientific-supply company. Cornell University purchased more than 500 of these sea animals—some of them under two inches in length. Eventually Harvard's Botanical Museum offered the Blaschkas an exclusive contract to make a variety of glass models of flowers. Over a forty-six-year period, the Blaschkas (principally Rudolf) produced nearly 850 full-size plant models and 3,200 magnified details for their Harvard patrons.



Leopold Blaschka, *left,* and his son, Rudolf.

With hindsight, one can see that the Blaschkas were possessed of the same taxonomic urge that motivated photographers such as Karl Blossfeldt (1865–1932), who magnified the forms of plants, and Eadweard Muybridge (1830–1904), whose famous motion studies first revealed that a running horse at one period of his stride has all four hooves off the ground. Like the work of these pioneers, the Blaschkas' glass objects fuse science and aesthetics, creating works that transcend categorization. Today the Blaschkas' masterful mimicry of nature resembles an especially advanced form of postmodern "appropriationist" art. The viewer is left to wonder what kind of poetic urge propelled the Blaschkas to capture living forms in such frozen perfection.

—Ronda Engman

"Nature's Wonders in Glass: The Art of the Blaschkas," at the Corning Museum of Glass, Corning, New York, through October 20, 1991.

***Above:* A glass model of a squid (*ommastrephes sagittatus*), circa 1885, approximately 20 cm in length. *Left:* A model of a spray of orchids, 1891.**

Left: **A pre-1917 Saint Petersburg poster advertising Treugolnik galoshes.** ***Below:*** **A poster for mineral water from the Shabolousky factory of Karyneyev, Gorshanov, and Co., circa 1900.**

SLAV APPEAL

WE TEND TO IMAGINE PREREVOLUTIONARY RUSSIA AS A land of crackpot spiritualists, sex-crazed czarinas, and unshaven anarchists—these are the eccentric characters that populate the literature and history of the period. It is easy to forget that the mass of Russians led more ordinary lives. Now a new exhibit, "Russian Graphic Design Before the Revolution, 1880–1917," illuminates the visual landscape of the Russian middle classes, including such bourgeois artifacts as theater programs, lavishly adorned menus, perfume labels, and candy wrappers.

From the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century, design styles proliferated in Russia—ranging from a Slavicized version of art nouveau to the indigenous and highly literary approach of the *World of Art* group. The most interesting works in the current exhibit overflow with opulent detail and surrealistic zaniness, as if to embody the tensions of a society approaching the point of self-destruction. An advertising poster depicting an armored warrior clutching a giant galosh as a shield, for example, captures the paradox of a medievally organized society confronting the modern world of mass consumer goods.

"Russian Graphic Design, 1880–1917" also gives viewers a context for understanding the well-known constructivist graphics of the postrevolutionary years—epitomized in the works of Vladimir Tatlin, El Lissitzky, and their followers. In fact, Mikhail Anikst, the curator of the exhibit and a noted graphic designer in Russia, discovered this material while doing research for a book on Soviet commercial design of the twenties and thirties. The present show demonstrates that the Russian genius for bold graphic statements developed over a long period of time.

The works in the exhibit, numbering over a hundred, are borrowed from the Lenin State Library in Moscow, the Soviet version of the Library of Congress, which tries to collect a copy of every document printed in the country. It is the first time this material has been allowed out of the archives for display. Although "Russian Graphic Design" will travel through America and Europe, it will not be presented in the Soviet Union itself: the Communist party still considers these prerevolutionary souvenirs too decadent for the proletarian audience. —*D.P.*

"Russian Graphic Design Before the Revolution, 1880–1917," at the Neuberger Museum, Purchase, New York, from July 17 to September 15, 1991. Organized by the American Federation of Arts.

BASQUE IN THE SPOTLIGHT

POOR IGNACIO ZULOAGA. THERE WAS a time when he was considered one of this century's greatest Spanish painters, the heir to the tradition of Velázquez, Goya, and El Greco. From the turn of the century through the 1930s, Zuloaga, a Basque realist from Zumaya, seemed to occupy a secure place in Spanish culture, his work celebrated by the most important writers and artists of his time. Today, because Zuloaga's paintings are all but forgotten, the Basque government has sponsored a retrospective to revive his reputation.

Zuloaga (1870–1945) belonged to Spain's artistic "Generation of '98," a group of brilliant young cynics who frequented bordellos and crafted unsentimental, often brutally candid paintings and literature from the raw material of their lives. Zuloaga himself was a larger-than-life figure, a sort of Basque version of Gérard Depardieu, known throughout Europe for his heroic physique (a cartoonist once sketched the painter with his huge arm cuddling the tiny Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec). When the artist toured America in the 1920s, the Memphis, Tennessee, *Commercial Appeal* trumpeted his arrival with the banner headline: "Ignacio Zuloaga—This Spaniard the Opposite of Effete."

The painter's circle of friends and admirers included the poet Rainer Maria Rilke and the elite of the Spanish literary world, such as Ramón de Valle-Inclán, Miguel de Unamuno, José Ortega y Gasset, and Rubén Dario. Ernest Hemingway and Guillaume Apollinaire were among his staunch supporters. Zuloaga was just as popular among artists. As a young man he hobnobbed with Paul Gauguin and Toulouse-Lautrec in Paris, but his greatest friendship was with French sculptor Auguste Rodin. Among the works in the Zuloaga Museum in Zumaya are three bronzes by Rodin, which the creator of *The Thinker* traded for works by the Basque painter. Even Edgar Degas, who was never noted for having a nice word about anyone, said of Zuloaga: "He is in the tradition of the great masters."

Today only the rare Spanish-art specialist studies Zuloaga's milieu, usually as a preface to delving into the vast Picasso archives. Viewing the current Zuloaga exhibit, one wonders why this once important figure has been relegated to such minor status. Part of the reason may be that he continued painting in a traditional style, inspired by Spanish masters of the past, when modernism came into vogue. Zuloaga also made the mistake of descending to the level of sheer kitsch in some works—skin-deep in every sense of the term—such as his arch-conventional *Nude Gypsy Girl with a Parrot* (1906).

It is true that this retrospective offers nothing of the avant-gardist. Instead, the eye feasts on sumptuous still-life works, evocative portraits, and color-saturated landscapes. Warmly carpeted wallpapered interiors, like those of *Torerillos de Pueblo* and *Celestina* (both from 1906), remind us of the once despised later works of Edouard Vuillard, who also indulged in unashamedly bourgeois subject matter. Just as this year's Vuillard show, which traveled from Lyons to Barcelona to Nantes, forced a reestimation of Vuillard's paintings of rich people *chez eux*, so the Zuloaga show illuminates the substantial achievements of a painter nearly lost to history.

—Benjamin Ivry

Ignacio Zuloaga, *Torerillos de Pueblo (Village Bullfighters)* (1906, oil on canvas, 197 cm x 145 cm).

"Ignacio Zuloaga (1870–1945), A Retrospective Exhibition," at the Meadows Museum, Dallas, through July 28; and at New York's Wildenstein Gallery, from September 25 to November 1.

A detail from Marc Chagall's *Introduction to the Jewish Art Theater* (1920, tempera, gouache, and white clay on canvas, 284 cm x 787 cm). The man being held in the air is Chagall.

WHAT CHAGALL

THE SHORT-LIVED JEWISH ART Theater opened on Moscow's Tchernychevski Street in 1920 with great hopes for the future of a liberated Russia. Before the opening gala, Marc Chagall covered the walls and ceilings with paintings that captured the moment's creative fervor in a dazzling display of joyful modernist fireworks, a colorful cascade of acrobats, animals, and folklore scenes. Just three years later, the theater was closed down and Chagall's paintings hastily removed under orders from the new Stalinist regime.

For fifty years, Chagall's murals were lost and presumed destroyed. But when the artist visited Moscow in 1973, he learned to his astonishment that the seven murals had been spirited away and hidden by a band of anonymous supporters, finally ending up in the reserves of Moscow's Tretyakov Gallery. Exhibited as a group, Chagall's lost murals, recently restored, as well as a large cache of paintings, drawings, and prints he made during his early years in Russia, are a revelation. Undoubtedly the key works of his career, they force a critical reappraisal of an artist too easily underestimated for the facile mannerisms of his later years.

Chagall was in his early thirties when he painted these murals, and they overflow with youthful exuberance as well as a formal sophistication acquired during the artist's sojourn in Paris before World War I. In the largest work—close to eight meters long by three meters in height—he depicts the actors and musicians of the Jewish Art Theater cavorting wildly across the broad face of a Dionysian world. In one section, a Hebrew letter transmutes into the dancing figure of a man, and close examination of a fiddler's head reveals a tiny landscape with flowerpots, a goat, and a strutting rooster. In these canvases there seems to be no limit to Chagall's cubist-inspired inventions.

—Michael Gibson

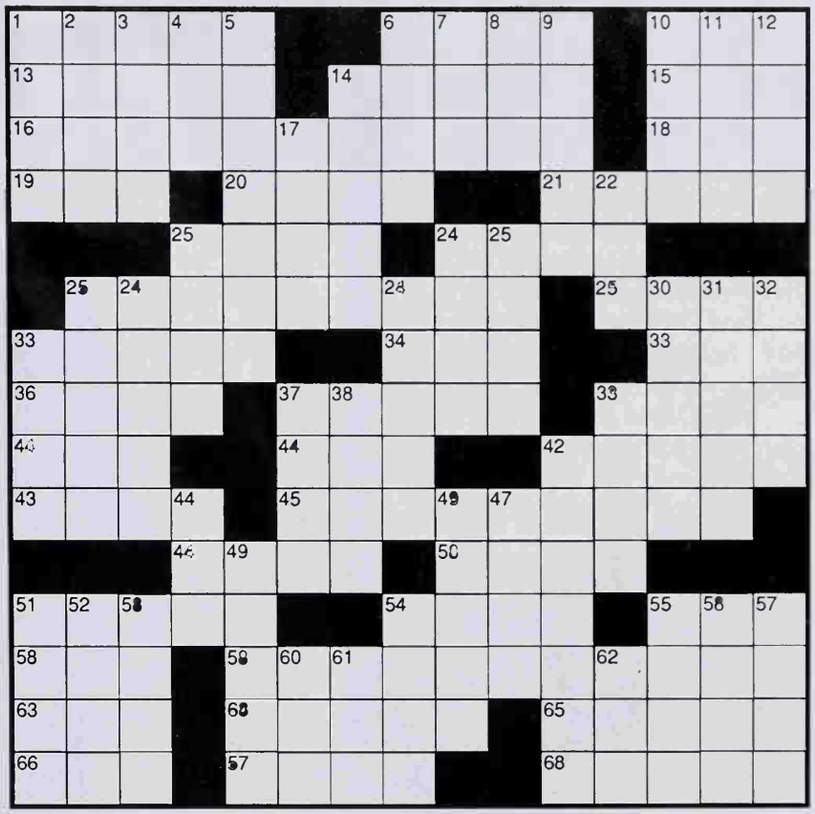
The exhibition of 180 paintings, drawings, and prints is at the Schirn Kunsthalle in Frankfurt until September 8.

CONNOISSEUR'S

crossword

IN THE GARDEN

by Michael Shenk



ACROSS

1 Heather shrub
6 Condition of night jasmine's blooming
10 Bathers' resort
13 Special Oscar winner of 1991
14 Circe, for one
15 Perfumer's _____ of lavender
16 Purple-flowered shrub
18 UN's labor agy.
19 Train depot: abbr.
20 Dom Pérignon producer
21 Formal tree-lined walk
23 Mine find
24 *The Four Seasons* director
26 Reddish-flowered shrub
29 Dry riverbed of Arabia
33 Complete
34 Baker's creation
35 Dress in
36 Child's play
37 Pungent garden herb
39 Baby's breath kin
40 Superlative suffix
41 Wilder's ___ *Town*
42 Large showy flower
43 Precious
45 Flower introduced in U.S. after WW II
48 Kind of drum or fiddle
50 Reclined
51 Spring bloom
54 Try gardening in a big way
55 CIA's predecessor
58 Here, in Lille
59 Fragrant tree strangler
63 Mall tree
64 Trellis climber
65 Fragrant purple flower
66 *Norma* ___ (Field movie)
67 Tries finger painting
68 Make suitable

DOWN

1 Building wings
2 Plant's anchor
3 Yellow leaves indicate its lack
4 These: French
5 Windflower
6 Garden stuff
7 Jackie's second hubby
8 Man in stripes
9 Work the dough
10 See 6 Down
11 Compost heap, e.g.
12 Century plant
14 Take the helm
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22 Regulation
23 Hyacinth's kin
24 In current condition
25 Dregs
26 Tail
27 Flower originated in Japan
28 *Der Rosenkavalier*, for one
30 Cisco's send-off
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51 Layer
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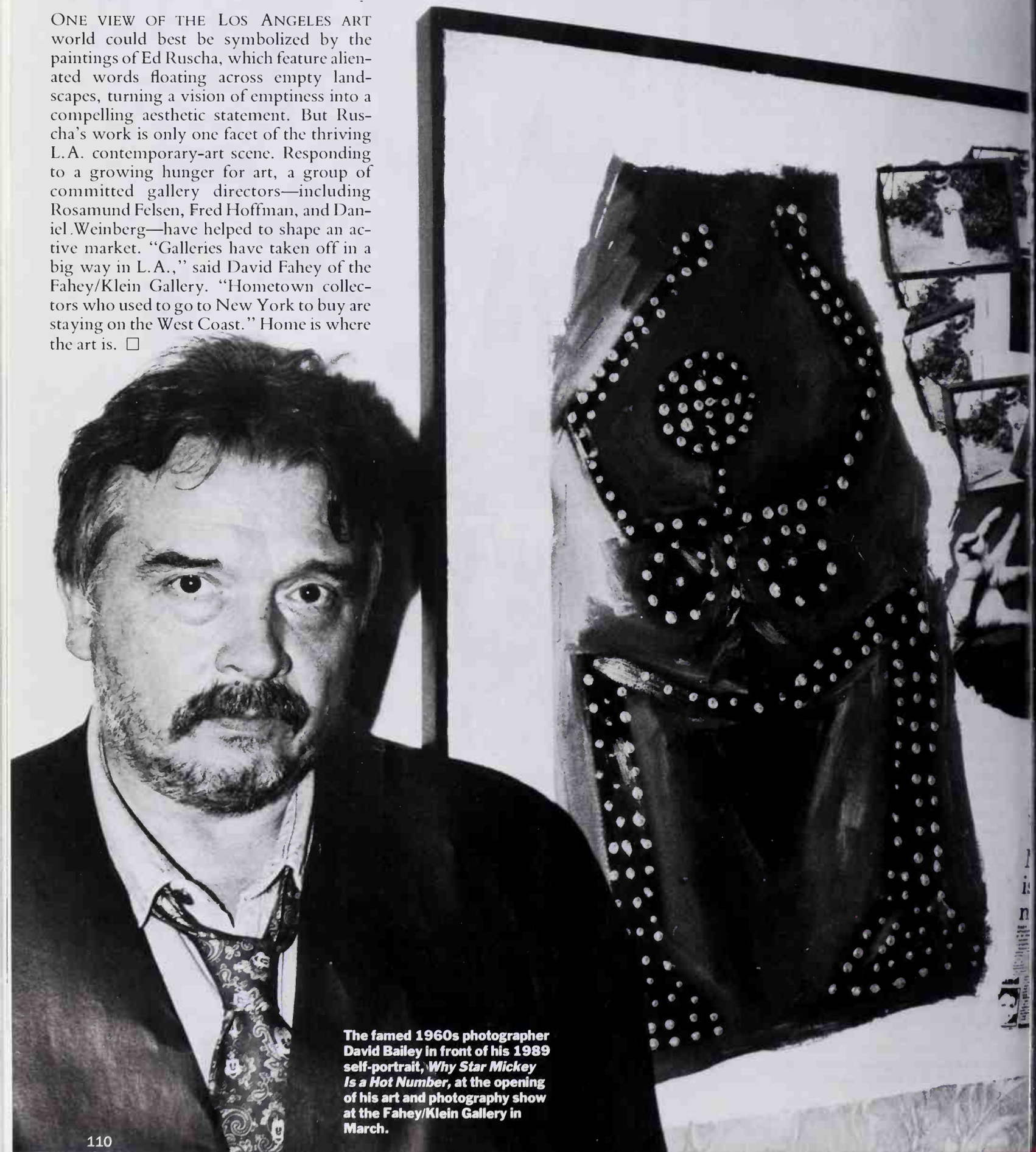
55 Neighbor of Tex.
56 Respond to freshness
57 Church offshoot
60 Eggs, in old Rome
61 Penpoint
62 Spanish hero

Solution to June puzzle:

L.A. Stories

photographs by Christopher Makos

ONE VIEW OF THE LOS ANGELES ART world could best be symbolized by the paintings of Ed Ruscha, which feature alienated words floating across empty landscapes, turning a vision of emptiness into a compelling aesthetic statement. But Ruscha's work is only one facet of the thriving L.A. contemporary-art scene. Responding to a growing hunger for art, a group of committed gallery directors—including Rosamund Felsen, Fred Hoffman, and Daniel Weinberg—have helped to shape an active market. "Galleries have taken off in a big way in L.A.," said David Fahey of the Fahey/Klein Gallery. "Hometown collectors who used to go to New York to buy are staying on the West Coast." Home is where the art is. □



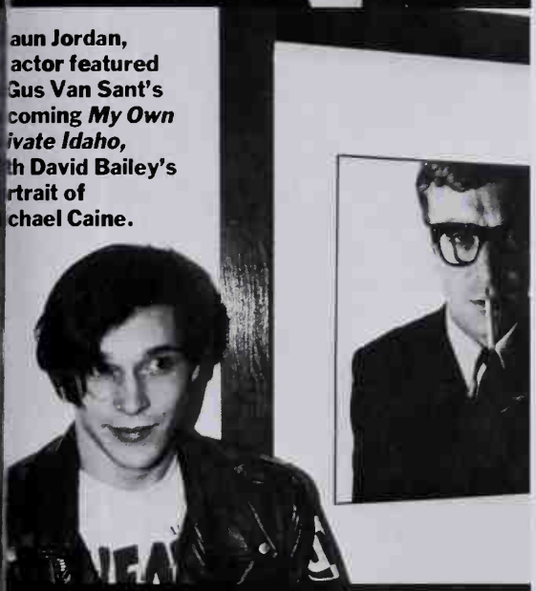
The famed 1960s photographer David Bailey in front of his 1989 self-portrait, *Why Star Mickey Is a Hot Number*, at the opening of his art and photography show at the Fahey/Klein Gallery in March.

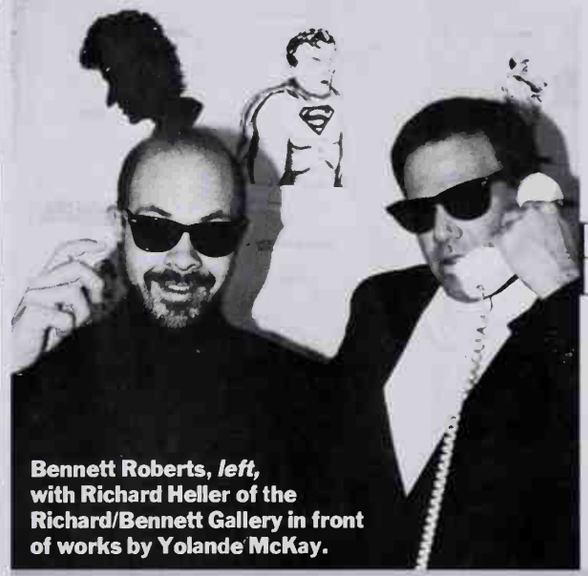
nmaker
n Schlesinger
David Bailey's opening.

Bernar Venet's sculptures at the Fred Hoffman Gallery in Santa Monica.

Fred Hoffman, director of the Fred Hoffman Gallery, with a Bernar Venet sculpture.

aun Jordan,
actor featured
Gus Van Sant's
coming *My Own*
ivate Idaho,
th David Bailey's
rtrait of
chael Caine.





Bennett Roberts, *left,* with Richard Heller of the Richard/Bennett Gallery in front of works by Yolande McKay.

Stuart Regen of the Stuart Regen Gallery during his show of works by Richard Prince.

lmut and June Newton at the
vid Bailey opening.

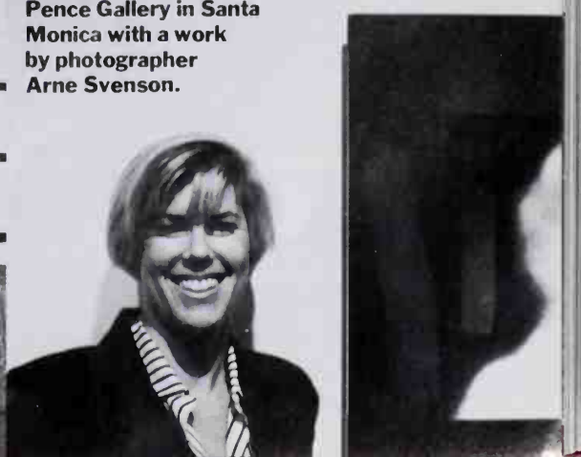
Burnett Miller of the Burnett Miller Gallery.

Rosamund Felsen of the Rosamund Felsen Gallery in front of artist Jeffrey Vallance's installation entitled *The Richard Nixon Museum.*

David Fahey of the Fahey/Klein Gallery in front of an untitled

Artist John Alexander, *left,* with Earl McGrath of the Earl McGrath Gallery.

Putter Pence of the Pence Gallery in Santa Monica with a work by photographer Arne Svenson.



something to declare

RANTINGS AND RAVINGS FROM OUR JET-SETTING PLUTOCRAT

These days no one has a good word to say about the eighties. People talk about the decade as if the Reagan years were the Dark Ages, when speech had been replaced by brochure-speak from style and travel magazines and humankind spent its time snorting coke, having facials, and watching violent porno videos.

Furthermore, the icons of the eighties have been hit by a long line of books and films that portray them as greedy sinners whose quest for power and glory turned them into soulless beasts. Needless to say, what is emerging is a picture of America painted by unsympathetic left-wing satirists who give aid and comfort to blame-Uncle-Sam-firsters throughout the world. In reality, however, what this is all about is the deconstruction of Reaganism and all it entailed.

America is a puritanical society, kind and understanding but also deeply suspicious of wealth and privilege. The decade of greed, as the eighties are now known, I feel, was a great one, and I for one enjoyed it immensely. Contrary to popular belief, the reason it became fashionable to flaunt one's wealth was not for any want of sensibility. On the contrary. Flaunting it was a way of expressing one's contempt for the knee-jerk, handwringing concern of the politically correct that the sixties had brought forth. Let me explain.

Until Ronald Reagan came along, the Left had always managed to make conservatives feel as if they were doing something immoral in their pursuit of monetary gains. In fact it was worse. There was a time during the sixties when it was considered downright immoral to be a capitalist, as though only the vulgar and low-minded cared about business.

Watergate did not help, nor did Jimmy Carter's reaching for the moral high ground while the American flag was being trampled on in such exotic places as Iran and Libya.

It was this prejudice that the yuppies rebelled against. Suddenly conspicuous consumption was in, and the hell with "gentleness" and being my brother's keeper. It wasn't pretty, but it was inevitable. In came the Porsche, the condo, and the yacht. Out went guilt. The whole attitude reflected a kind of liberation of the American psyche.

Mind you, the Left was not about to take this lying down. Deregulation and freedom in the money markets were seen as the loss of deeper values, material possessions replacing the soul. Today liberal writers whine about the eighties and their rampant materialism as a failure of conscience. Kitty Kelley's book of unsubstantiated gossip assumed the proportions of a bible, with thousands of liberals echoing the "I told you so" cry. The moral decline predicted by those opposed to capitalism is now confirmed by, of all people, Ms. Kelley, probably the most venal of all women, and that includes Fancy Nancy.

Recently I read one John Hess, a bitter old man writing in the *New York Observer*. He claimed that "Ronald Reagan should have been impeached a dozen times. His personality was an insult to our intelligence and his conduct a disgrace to the flag and a disaster to our country." In my not so humble opinion, Hess is a pitiful figure, an insult to our intelligence, and for reasons of my own, I believe the flag to have been in good hands while the Gipper was in the White House.

Before the Hesses of this world sneer, they should take a look around. The farther away from the West one travels, the more one sees societies that are not bothered by conspicuous displays of wealth, power, rank, and hierarchy. In India, known as the most populous democracy in the world, there is a caste system that is thriving, while in Japan, one can always tell who is of higher rank by the depth of the bow of the lower. There is no neurosis about privilege in either country.

Which brings me back to the good old USA. There is much too much harping about privilege here. Most of it comes from the academics, a self-perpetuating elite if there ever was one. The blue-collar worker loved the eighties and Ronald Reagan. And I don't care how many books and films portray America in the last decade as a greedy place. It was a grand time, and no matter how much the Left whines about it, are you better off today than you were a few years ago? □

BY TAKI

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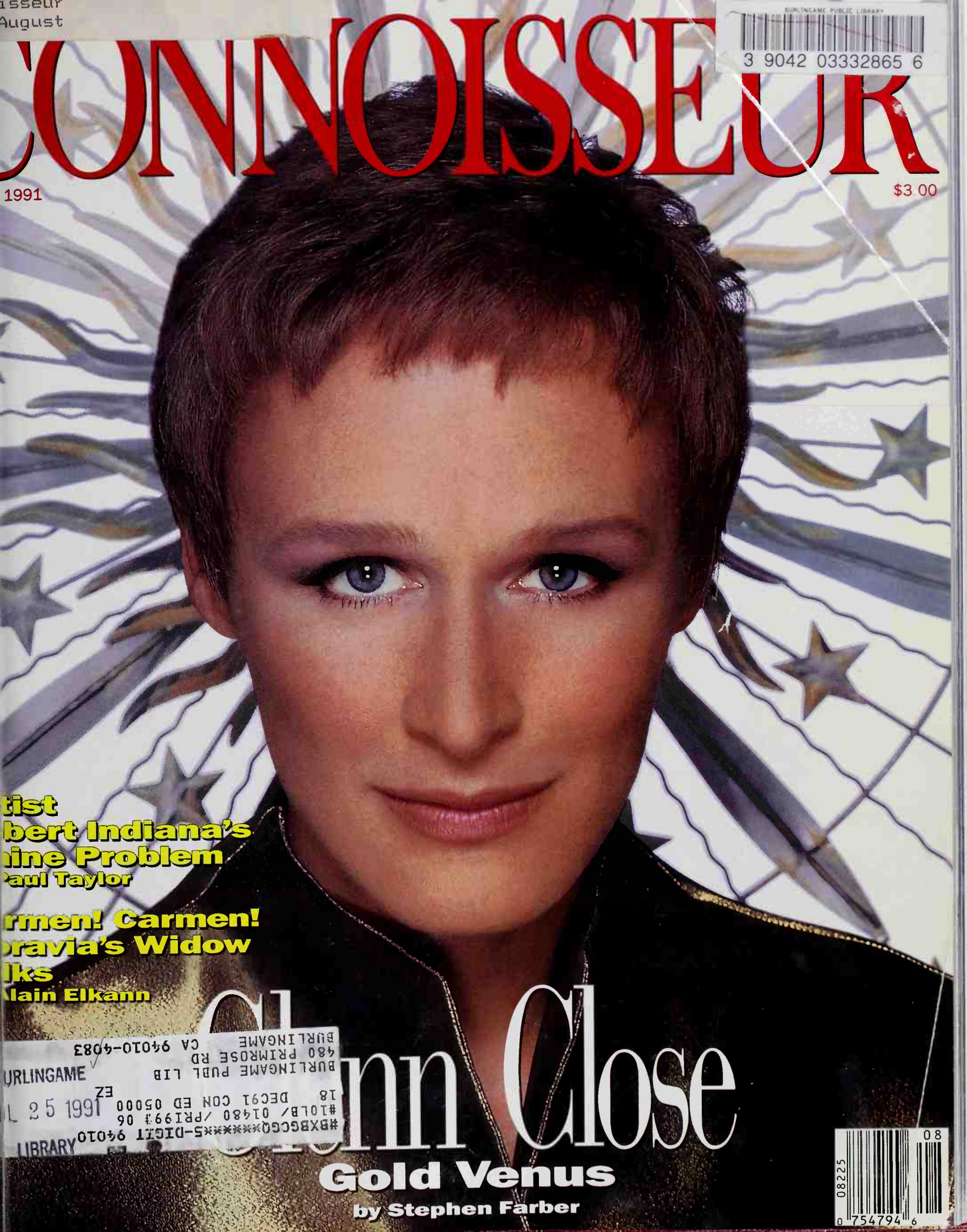

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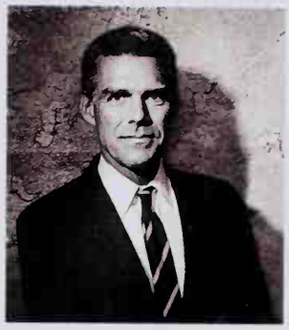

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VOLUME 221, NUMBER 955

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Glenn Close photographed exclusively for *Connoisseur* by Walter Chin. Ms. Close's jacket, Jil Sander. Astrological sculpture from the Janet Botaish Collection, artist unknown. Styled by Garth Condit. Hair by Gad Cohen for Gad Cohen Studio. Makeup by Mathu Anderson for Chanel. Manicure by Wanda for Wanda Skincare. Details, see Shopping Guide.

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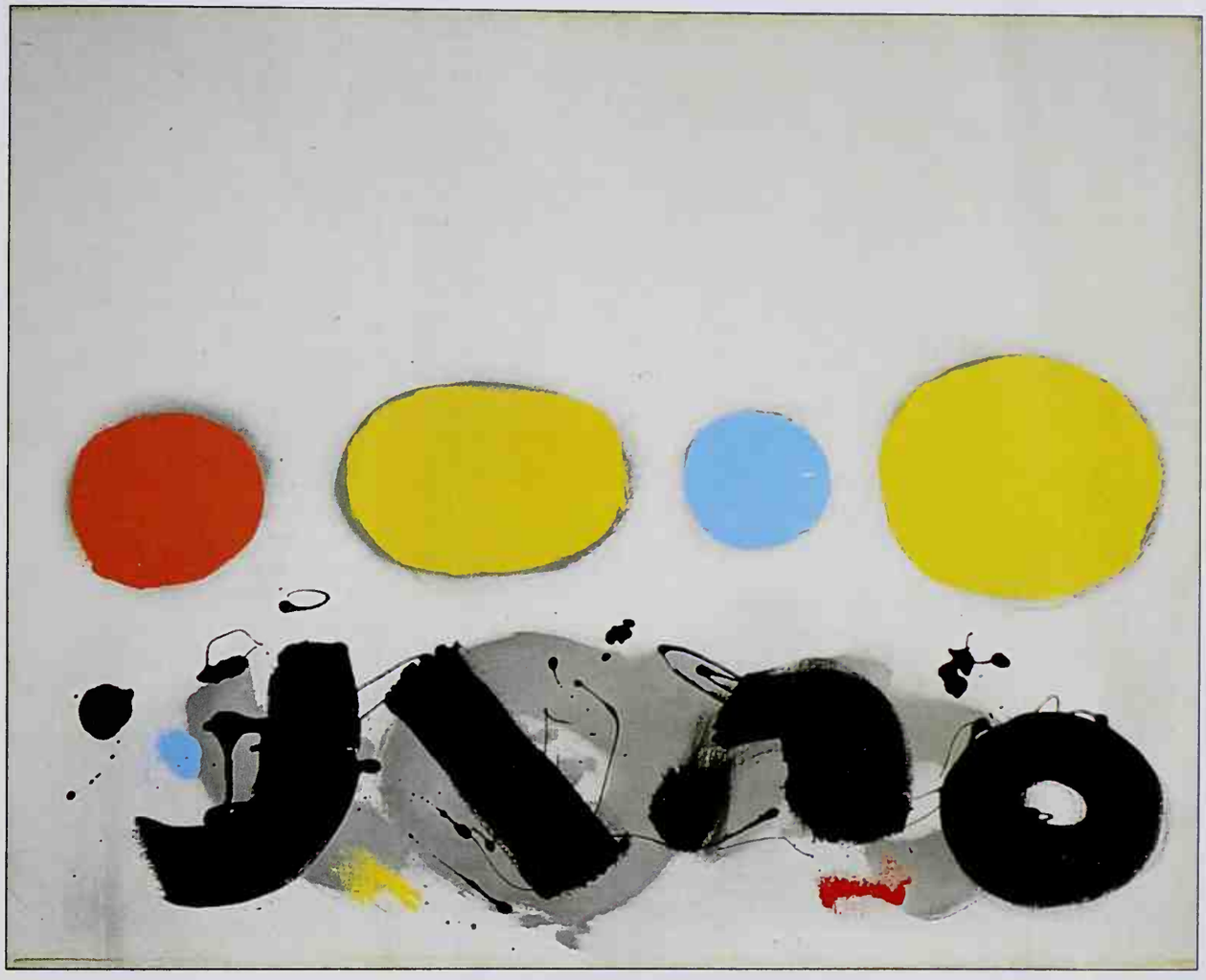

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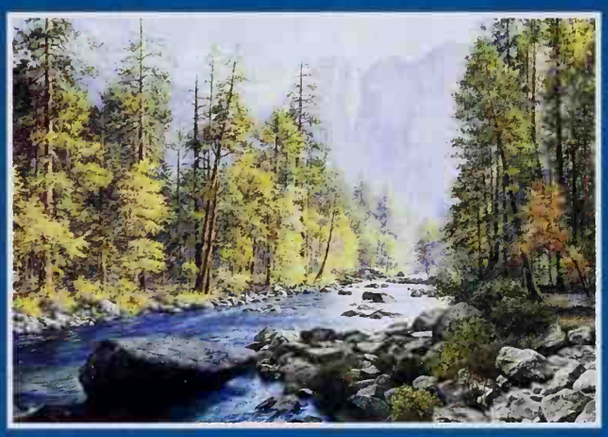

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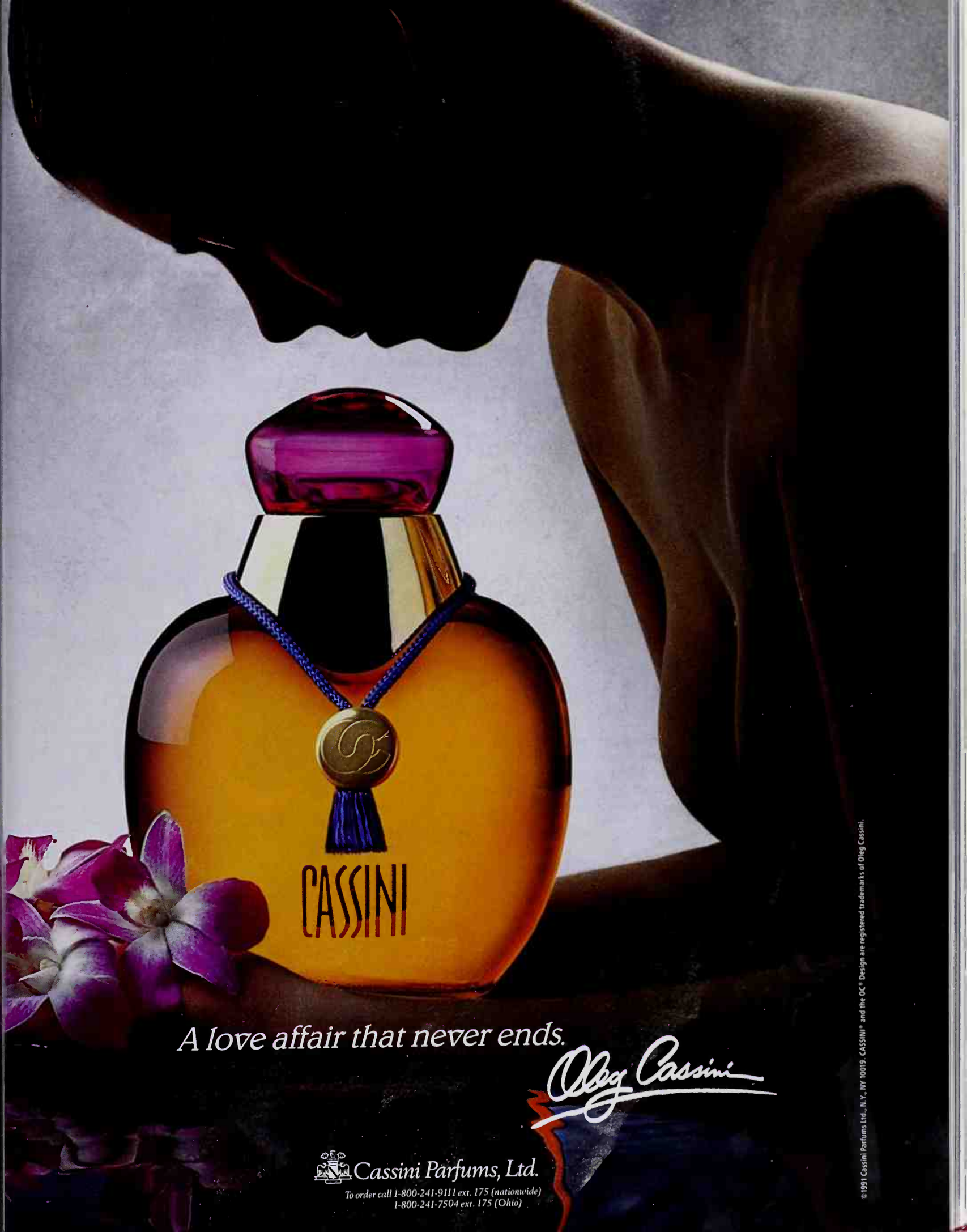
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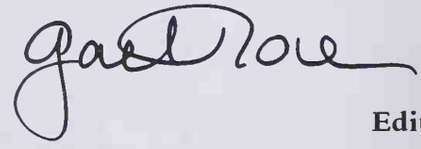
EDITOR'S LETTER

LOVE AND DEATH—AND THE PECULIAR RELATIONSHIP they often have with the creative spirit—are the themes of two fascinating articles this month: a sweeping analysis of *The Death of Klinghoffer,* the new opera about the tragic terrorist hijacking of the *Achille Lauro* in 1985, and a profile of Carmen Moravia, widow of the late Italian novelist Alberto Moravia.

In a critical piece of unprecedented depth, music writer Mark Swed discusses the sometimes frightening contradictions and conundrums that are present in both modern politics and modern art as they were played out on two momentous days. The first was October 8, 1985, the day that a wheelchair-bound tourist from New York City was mercilessly shot and thrown off a cruise ship in the middle of the Mediterranean. The second was March 19, 1991, the premiere of the unlikely opera written about this tragedy by the audacious team that brought you *Nixon in China:* Peter Sellars, John Adams, Alice Goodman, and Mark Morris.

Although you may not leave humming the tunes from *The Death of Klinghoffer,* there is undeniable import in the way in which Sellars and company exploit today's events—and the media—to do what perhaps only opera can do: present an abstract emotional undercurrent that manages to tie together the often bewildering questions raised by violent political issues. And as Swed reports, it makes good theater as well: moving and mysteriously overwhelming.

ALAIN ELKANN, WHOSE *VITA DI MORAVIA* WILL BE published in an English-language version next year, won Carmen Moravia's confidence—an impressive feat considering how wary she must be of being in the public eye at this point. The Italian press, after all, had gone into overdrive when it learned that the wife of Italy's most revered contemporary novelist was having an affair with none other than the Lebanese Druse leader Walid Jumblatt. For his interview Elkann found Carmen, an author herself, quite eager to tell all about her decade with Alberto—their personal as well as creative relationship—and a life that to some may seem stranger than fiction.



Gael Love
Editor-in-Chief

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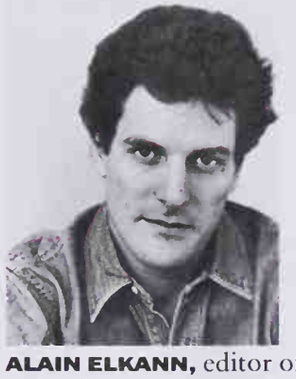
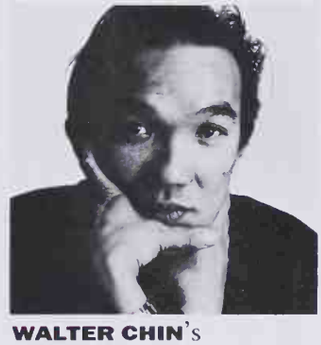
CONTRIBUTORS

DAFYDD JONES, a *Connoisseur* contributing editor whose photographs have previously appeared in *Vanity Fair* and in London's *Tatler,* is working on a book of society pictures. He photographed the Royal Caledonian Ball in London for "Public Displays," his new monthly column. Page 116.



ALAIN ELKANN, editor of Italy's literary magazine *Panta* and the author of seven books, collaborated with the late Alberto Moravia on *Vita di Moravia* (Arcade), to be published in the U.S. next year. During an exclusive interview he talked to Moravia's young widow, Carmen, about her extraordinary life with—and without—the giant of Italian letters. Page 52.

MARK SWED, a music critic who regularly writes for the *Wall Street Journal,* traveled to Brussels to review the controversial opera *The Death of Klinghoffer,* which premieres in New York next month. Page 14.

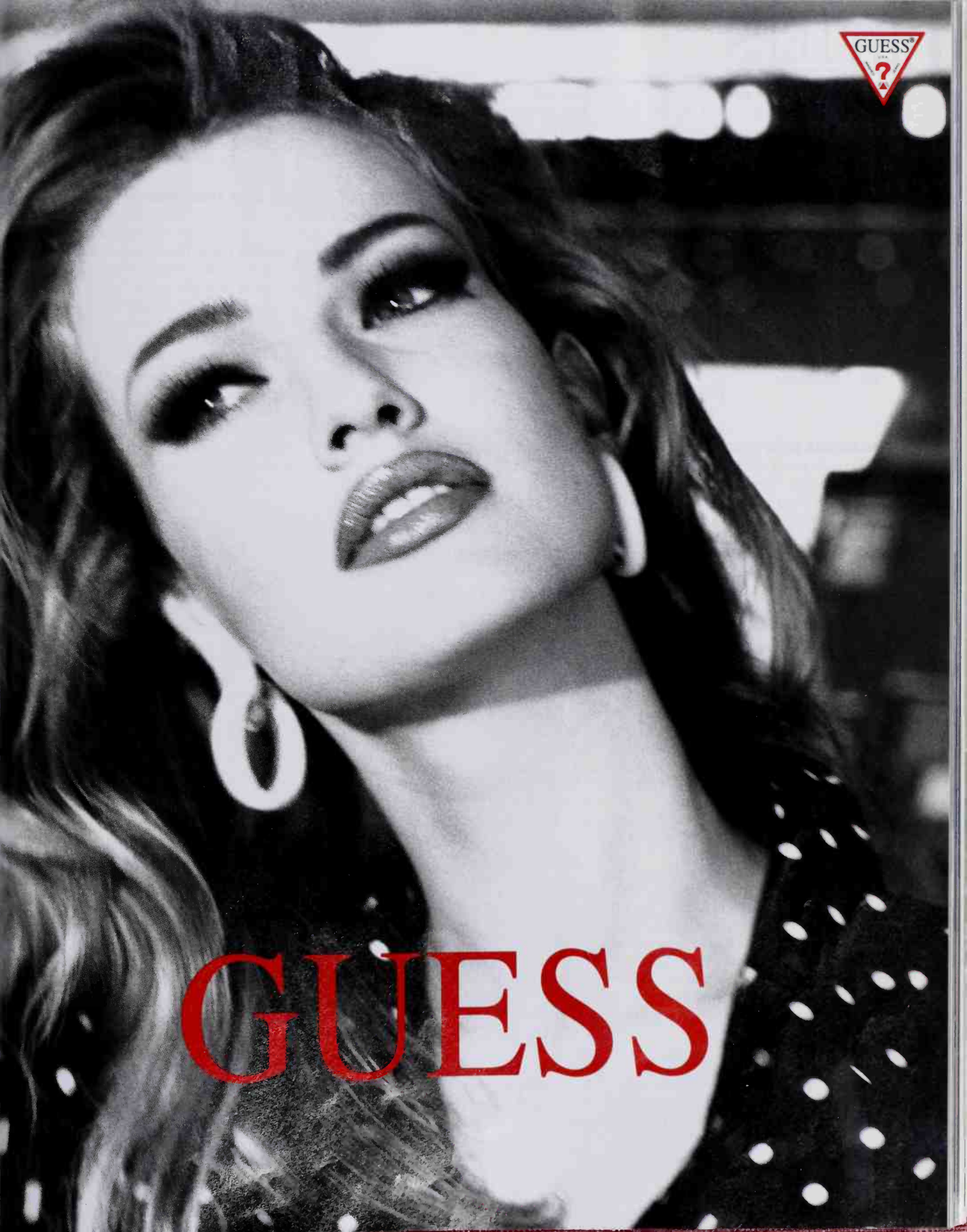


WALTER CHIN's photographs regularly appear in *Vogue, GQ,* and the European editions of *Elle.* He captures the peculiar radiance of actress Glenn Close for our cover story.

STEPHEN FARBER is the author of three books and writes on film for the *New York Times.* This month he interviews actress Glenn Close about her new role as an opera singer in *Meeting Venus,* to open in October. Page 40.

CAROL ISAAK BARDEN writes on travel, fashion, and health for *Condé Nast Traveler, Town & Country, Elle,* and *Lear's.* In Arizona she visited America's most luxurious spa and the old guard's best-kept secret, Maine Chance. Page 70.

PAUL TAYLOR, a *Connoisseur* contributing editor, is preparing a book of interviews with art-world personalities. He traveled to Vinalhaven, a remote island off the coast of Maine, to speak to Robert Indiana about the controversy surrounding the pop artist's life. Page 46.


GUESS

LETTERS

PLEASE BE SEATED

Paula Deitz's article "The 23 Best Chairs," in the May issue, made my bile boil. A chair is defined as something on which you sit, and unless it is further defined as an instrument of torture, the implication is that you may add the words *in comfort*. What Ms. Deitz chose to illustrate was twenty-three instruments of torture. Not one single chair—not the van der Rohe, not the Eames, not the Wassily—gave as much as a thought to ergonomics, comfort, or body structure.

I find nothing so infuriating as fake art, committed for the sole purpose of startling people.

R. E. Kaufmann
Los Gatos, CA

FABERGÉ DISPUTE

Where on earth did Jerry Patterson get the idea that "there are an estimated 250,000 pieces of Fabergé in the world," as he states without qualification in his "Valuations" column in the June issue? The highest number of pieces produced by Fabergé estimated by any authority (for example, H. C. Bainbridge and Kenneth Snowman, who have written books on the subject, or Alexander von Soldkoff of Christie's Geneva, or A la Vieille Russie, which deals in Russian art) is 120,000. There are fewer than 5,000 pieces of Fabergé in publicly accessible collections in the world. No one is certain how many of these 120,000 survive today, but as Fabergé collectors know, alas, it's a woefully small number. But regardless, Patterson's figure of 250,000 is wildly inaccurate.

Richard Curry
Dallas, TX

Editor's note: Per Peter Schaffer, of A la Vieille Russie antiques in New York City, there are an estimated 250,000 pieces of Fabergé. This information was given to him by Nina Lopato, curator of the Hermitage Museum in Leningrad. Discoveries this past year in the Soviet Union indicate that the commonly quoted figure of 120,000 was a gross underestimation.

BRAVO, *CONNOISSEUR*!

As a loyal advertiser and devoted reader of your magazine, I have waited eagerly for *Connoisseur* to again position itself at the forefront of the upscale publications. With the arrival of the June issue, I can only say, "Bravo, *Connoisseur*!" You have not only exceeded my most optimistic expectations but have also once again demonstrated your commitment and dedication to your many readers. Congratulations.

Benjamin D. McCready
Whitewater, WI

What a refreshing and welcome change in your magazine! Good riddance to those exasperating bits of fluff that formerly filled your pages. The June issue is substantive, stimulating, and highly readable—a real knockout. Keep up the good work!

Nancy Eisenman
Simsbury, CT

HOMEGROWN TREASURES

Being an avid fan (and subscriber) of *Connoisseur* for many years, I was disturbed by the missing facts in David Rieff's article on designer-director Robert Wilson, "The Exile Returns" [June].

While Mr. Rieff belabored the fact that Mr. Wilson's work is unappreciated and neglected in the United States, he failed to mention the 1990 design/staging of Gluck's *Alceste* for the Lyric Opera of Chicago with Jessye Norman and Christopher Merritt, which received unanimous critical and artistic praise. Mr. Wilson personally oversaw the Chicago production, which was originally conceived for the Staatstheater Stuttgart.

Get the facts before you state that "Americans are finally realizing what a world of homegrown cultural treasures they have allowed to slip away"!

Kenneth P. Chrzastek
Chicago, IL

David Rieff replies: I fail to see why my straightforward account of Robert Wilson's inability to get backing for his productions in his own country and of the decision he was forced to take, as a direct result of this, to work mostly in Europe has excited such outrage in Mr. Chrzastek. Indeed, his letter provides a perfect illustration of my point: the *Alceste* that Wilson put on in Chicago was a restaging of work Wilson was able to do in the first place only because a German theater had been willing to back him. As admirable as the efforts of the Chicago Lyric Opera and the American Repertory Theater are, the American public deserves better than to see Wilson's work in this partial and occasional form, as if his were a foreign theater like the Kabuki or the Bolshoi ballet.

THE WAY THEY WERE

I have just read "The Way They Were" in your June issue—to the last sentence: "The old Palm Beach seems almost to blend with the Old South—a civilization gone with the wind." In my opinion, "old" Palm Beach could never blend with the Old South, either in character or historically. Our southern civilization was destroyed by the war of northern aggression, not lost because of "partying around the pool" in an expensive housing development.

Any attempt to romanticize the Palm Beach crowd by association with our beloved South because of their shared "reduced" circumstances is deeply resented.

Grace N. Ray
Irving, TX

SQUANDERED FORTUNE

The article "Squandered Fortune: The Life and Times of Huntington Hartford," by Lisa Gubernick [June], has awakened in me a long-forgotten memory. In 1924, I was perhaps the youngest employee of the A&P Grocery Company. At seven years of age, I earned ten cents for each grocery order I delivered in my homemade wagon for our village A&P store in South Orange, New Jersey.

Sixty years later, I was the head of the art department at West Texas State College, and I received a letter from Mr. Hartford soliciting my help to find and recommend a man to head one of his grandiose art ventures. He left no doubt that he was truly conversant with the general likes and dislikes in art in this part of the Texas Panhandle: "I am looking for a suitable director, a man of conservative viewpoint who takes a fairly strong position against the current avant-garde movement . . . one who would be prepared to act as a spokesman and generally support my point of view in favor of representational art."

Emilio Caballero
Amarillo, TX

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GEORGES MARCIANO

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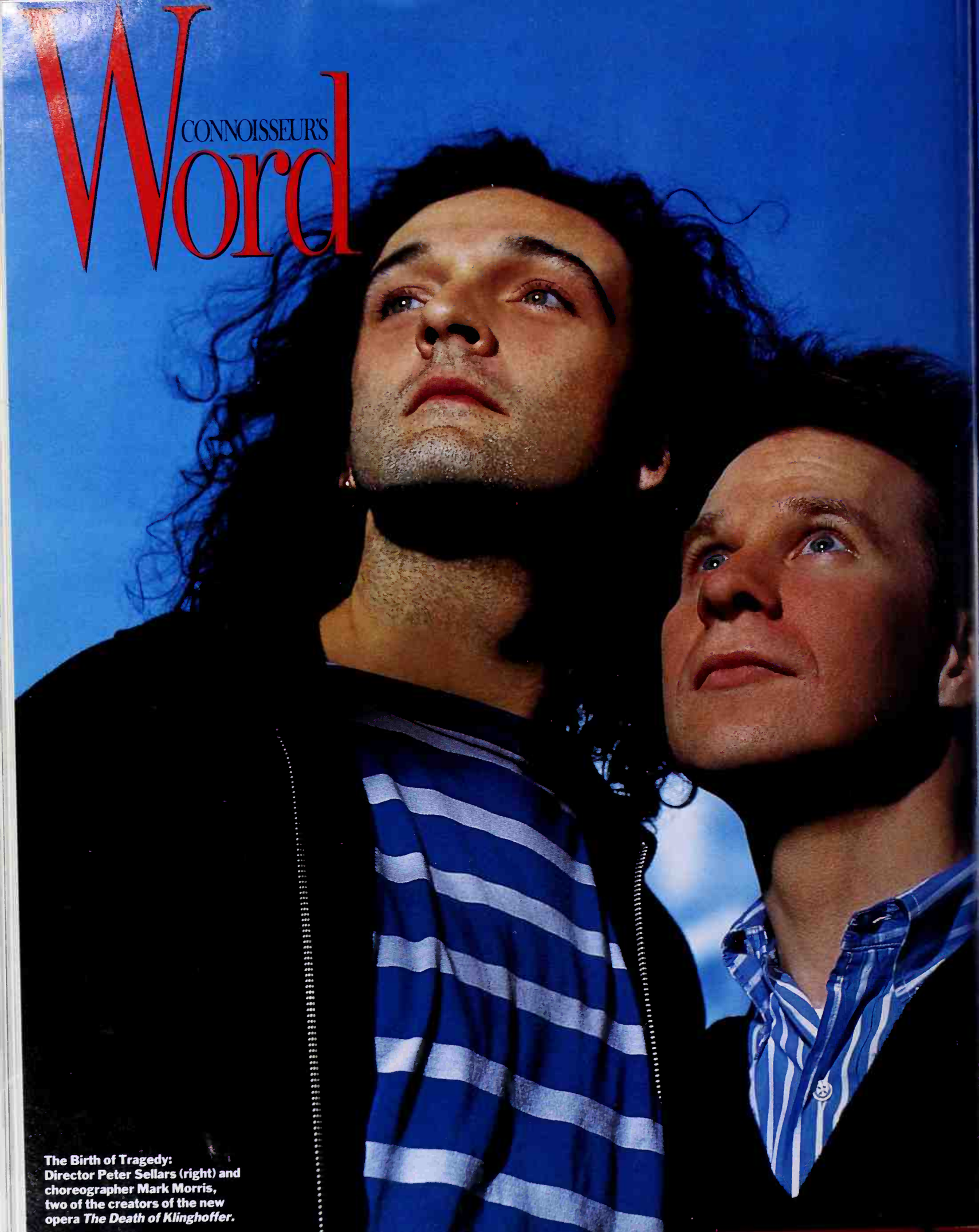


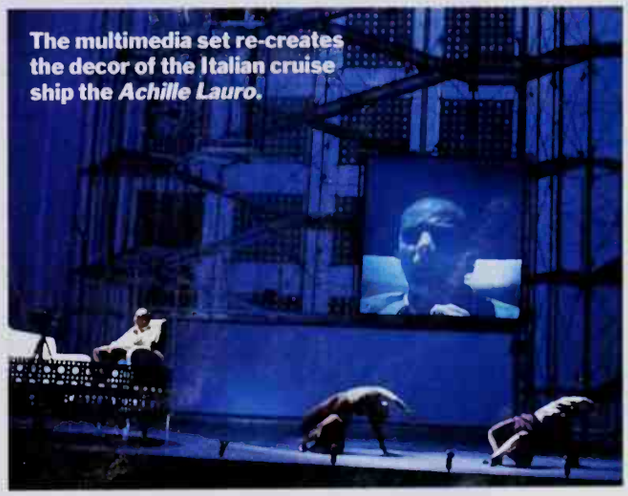
The Birth of Tragedy: Director Peter Sellars (right) and choreographer Mark Morris, two of the creators of the new opera *The Death of Klinghoffer.*

THE ACHILLE'S LAUREATES

With The Death of Klinghoffer, *the people who brought you* Nixon in China *unleash the primordial forces of political terror on the world of opera.*

by Mark Swed

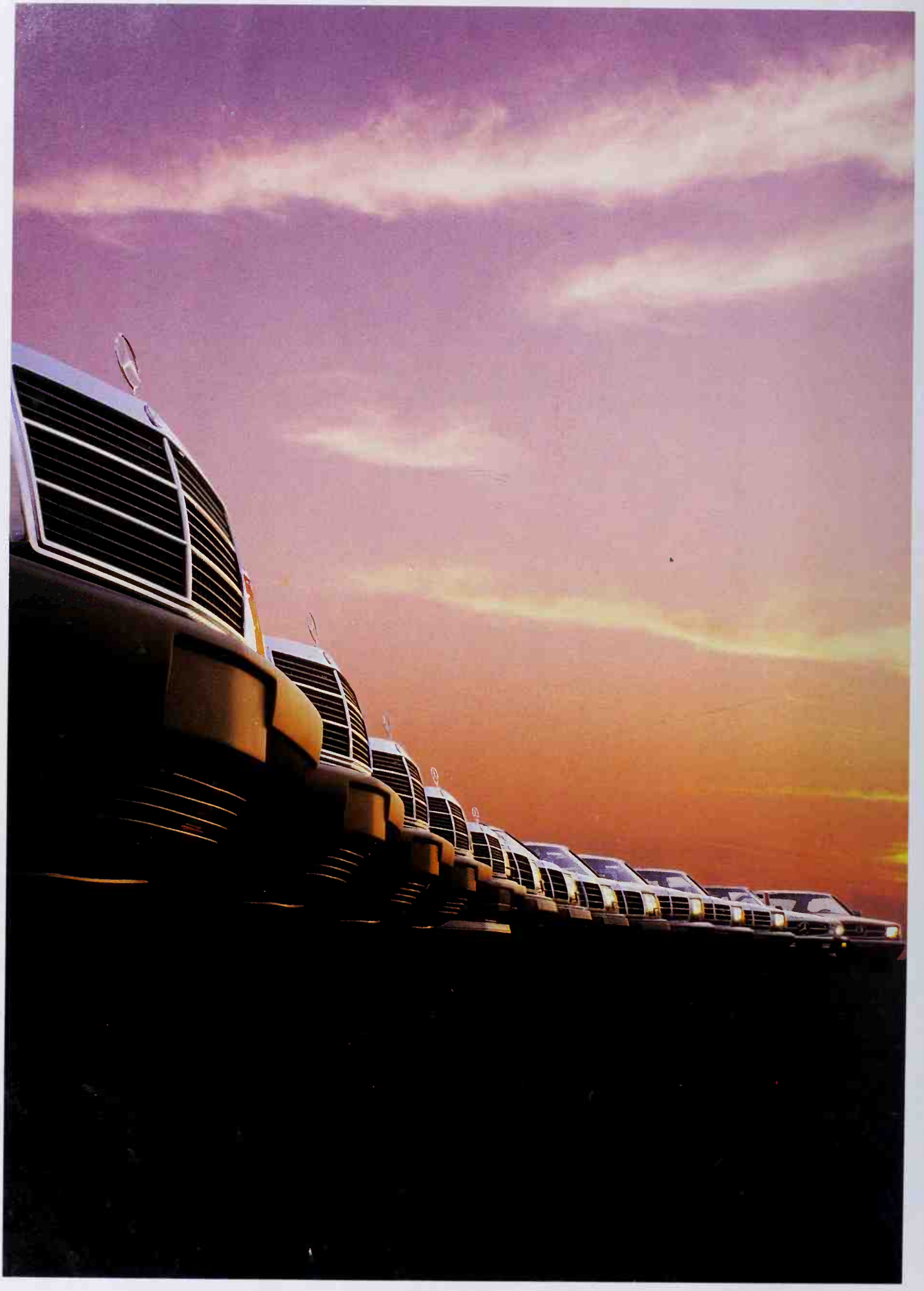
Brussels was bracing itself for trouble on March 19, 1991. This normally uneventful capital of the European Economic Community, a conservative, well-run haven for bankers, businessmen, and bureaucrats, also happens to have one of the Continent's largest Arab ghettos. And for months before the opening date of *The Death of Klinghoffer,* a new opera by a band of young Americans, world events had conspired to make the work far more than just another large-scale artistic enterprise. As the premiere approached, a strict media blackout was enforced by all involved with the production. Rehearsals were secretly held far from the opera house. The city's innovative opera company Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie withheld an official press release until the last moment.



The multimedia set re-creates the decor of the Italian cruise ship the *Achille Lauro.*

Everyone had long known that *The Death of Klinghoffer,* which will arrive in the U.S. at the Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM) in September, would attract as much media attention as any musical event not starring Madonna. That it was the second opera by director Peter Sellars, composer John Adams, librettist Alice Goodman, and choreographer Mark Morris—the team responsible for the celebrated *Nixon in China*—was enough to pique genuine curiosity. But the remarkable nature of the subject matter seemed especially audacious, even for the cheeky team. This would not be a celebrity opera nor would it focus on historical personalities: *Nixon in China* had

LEFT: PHOTOGRAPHED EXCLUSIVELY FOR *CONNOISSEUR* BY MARKUS RÖSSLE; *RIGHT:* MARTHA SWOPE



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already generated an imitative string of those, on subjects ranging from Marilyn to Manson. Nor would it be a docudrama about Leon Klinghoffer, the wheelchair-bound American passenger on the Italian cruise ship *Achille Lauro* who was murdered by pro-Palestinian terrorists during a 1985 hijacking: television had done that, twice. *The Death of Klinghoffer* would instead concentrate on the larger historical passions, the epic struggles between Israelis and Palestinians, between Jew, Christian, and Muslim, and on how those conflicts have for so long had a way of inflaming the entire world.

Going into rehearsal two days after the start of the Persian Gulf war, this opera about terrorism suddenly seemed a likely target for terrorism itself. Rumors of bomb threats were ever present, and speculation that it would be postponed, or even canceled, was rife. Everyone's worst fears seemed confirmed when it was reported that two men associated with Abu Abbas, the Syrian-born terrorist who masterminded the *Achille Lauro* hijacking, were found wandering around the Grand Place; they were arrested by Brussels police but were later released when the authorities could find nothing on which to hold them. "Any village idiot, and there are quite a few here, could have called to say a bomb would go off halfway through the opening scene," a fearful Interior Minister Louis Tobback warned, further fueling the rumor mills.

No village idiot did. The war ended about a week before opening night, and although security was beefed up, there were no incidents.

Ironically, the end of the war, and with it the diminished likelihood of a terrorist threat, only made *Klinghoffer* more attractive to the international press. Publications from around the world inundated Brussels with those two very unusual breeds of journalist—the music critic and the cultural correspondent—who, when it became evident that there were no Palestinian terrorists, Jewish radicals, or Klinghoffer family members around to comment, began interviewing one another and turning in articles about the stories that were being written. Newspapers that couldn't afford to send music critics to Brussels relied upon their bureau chiefs there, even if they were economic specialists, to cover the story.

Marilyn (foreground) and Leon Klinghoffer (right) on vacation aboard the *Achille Lauro* in 1985. Only days later, Leon was murdered.

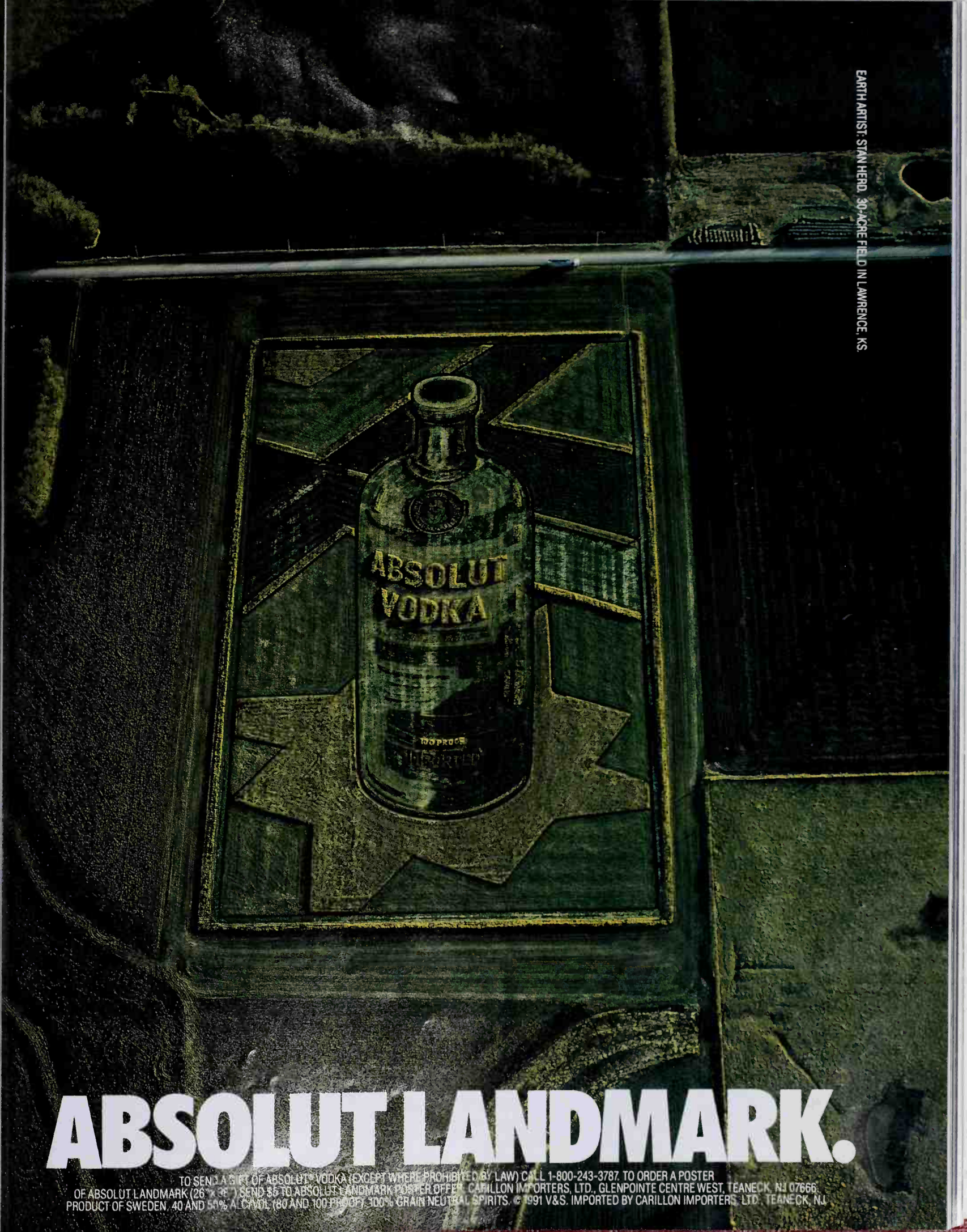
Even without an international incident, the media hubbub was not unwarranted. *Klinghoffer* is, after all, an opera centered around an event of epic proportions, just as *Nixon in China* had been. And the opera's creators are a colorful crew who seemingly thrive under the spotlight, able to provoke outrage and adulation in equal measure.

Peter Sellars is, of course, always news. The outrageous thirty-three-year-old director has specialized in lively and controversial versions of the classics—productions in which Tannhäuser's struggle with the flesh and the spirit is personified by a Jimmy Swaggart–type evangelist or Don Giovanni's attempted date rape of Donna Anna is exposed for what it is. A modern-day Diaghilev, he recognizes great talent and has the vision to bring people together and make things happen. By attracting a consortium of opera companies to commission *Klinghoffer*—including the Opéra de Lyon (where it was performed in April and recorded by Nonesuch Records), BAM, the Los Angeles Music Center Opera and the San Francisco Opera (both companies will produce it in fall 1992), and Glyndebourne (which has yet to set a date)—he has ensured that *Klinghoffer* will have a three-year life and, most important, perhaps, that audiences and critics will approach it more than once.

John Adams, who has managed to incorporate minimalism into mainstream American composition, has, at one extreme, been hailed as the successor to Leonard Bernstein and Aaron Copland and, at the other, been accused of writing in a style that is to music what "See Dick run" is to literature. Mark Morris, whose choreography can be supercilious one moment and shockingly beautiful the next, has been a favorite topic of Brussels cultural life in the three years his company has been in residence at Monnaie, alternately welcomed and told to go home in blazing newspaper headlines. And Alice Goodman is—well—the Bette Davis of poetry.

Klinghoffer embraces as much hype as the media can give it and then asks the audience to find the transcendental in the familiar.

In the end, *Klinghoffer* did, at its unveiling, prove to be newsworthy and important. It is a work that raises compelling political, moral, and theatrical questions; its daring had little to do with the flashy sensationalism the media had hoped to revel in. Sellars and his collaborators have, instead, fashioned a profound, darkly disturbing, uncompromising work, rich in musical and theatrical meaning. "Opera is a complex form," Sellars told a packed auditorium of journalists at a press conference the morning *(Continued on page 86)*



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KEEPER OF THE FAME

New York gallery owner Jason McCoy may be Jackson Pollock's nephew and the trustee of all the artist's unsold works. But he would rather talk about his other assets, among them the gifted young artists he has promoted throughout his career.

by Deborah Gimelson

New York art dealer Jason McCoy with Jackson Pollock's *Untitled* (ca. 1946–47, brown India ink on paper, 8⅞" x 11⅞").

Think of the front room as something like publishing poetry," the towheaded Jason McCoy tells a recent visitor to his Fifty-seventh Street gallery. The forty-three-year-old McCoy has given over this space in his gallery to the works of relatively unknown, modestly priced contemporary artists (among them Philip Smith's multilayered designs on canvas; Michael Tetherow's sensuous, amorphous shapes; Helen Miranda Wilson's small, jewellike landscapes), a gesture indicative of where McCoy's real interests—if not his most valuable inventory—lie.

There are not as many Jackson Pollocks as one might expect in the Jason McCoy gallery, which might surprise those who know that McCoy is the legendary abstract expressionist's nephew and the appointed dealer (through the Pollock-Krasner Foundation) for Pollock's few remaining unsold paintings. One, a mid-1940s work on paper, hangs in the same room as a Mark Rothko from *(Continued on page 89)*

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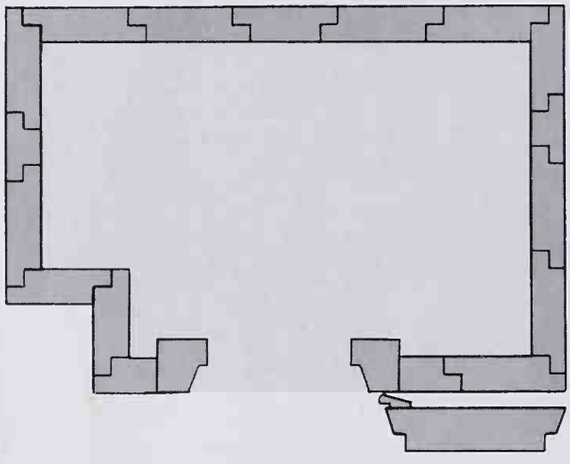

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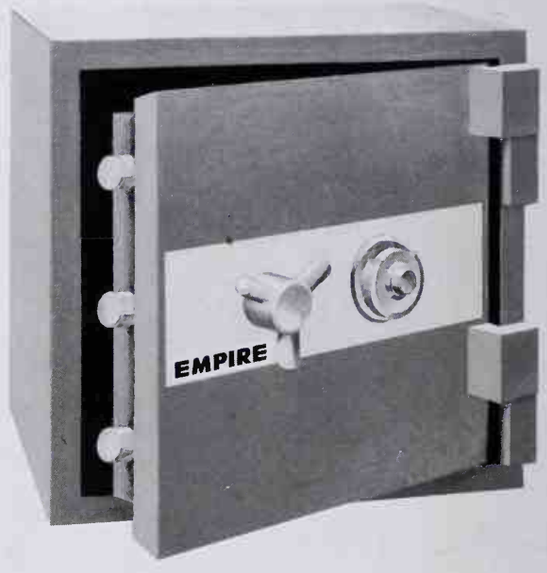

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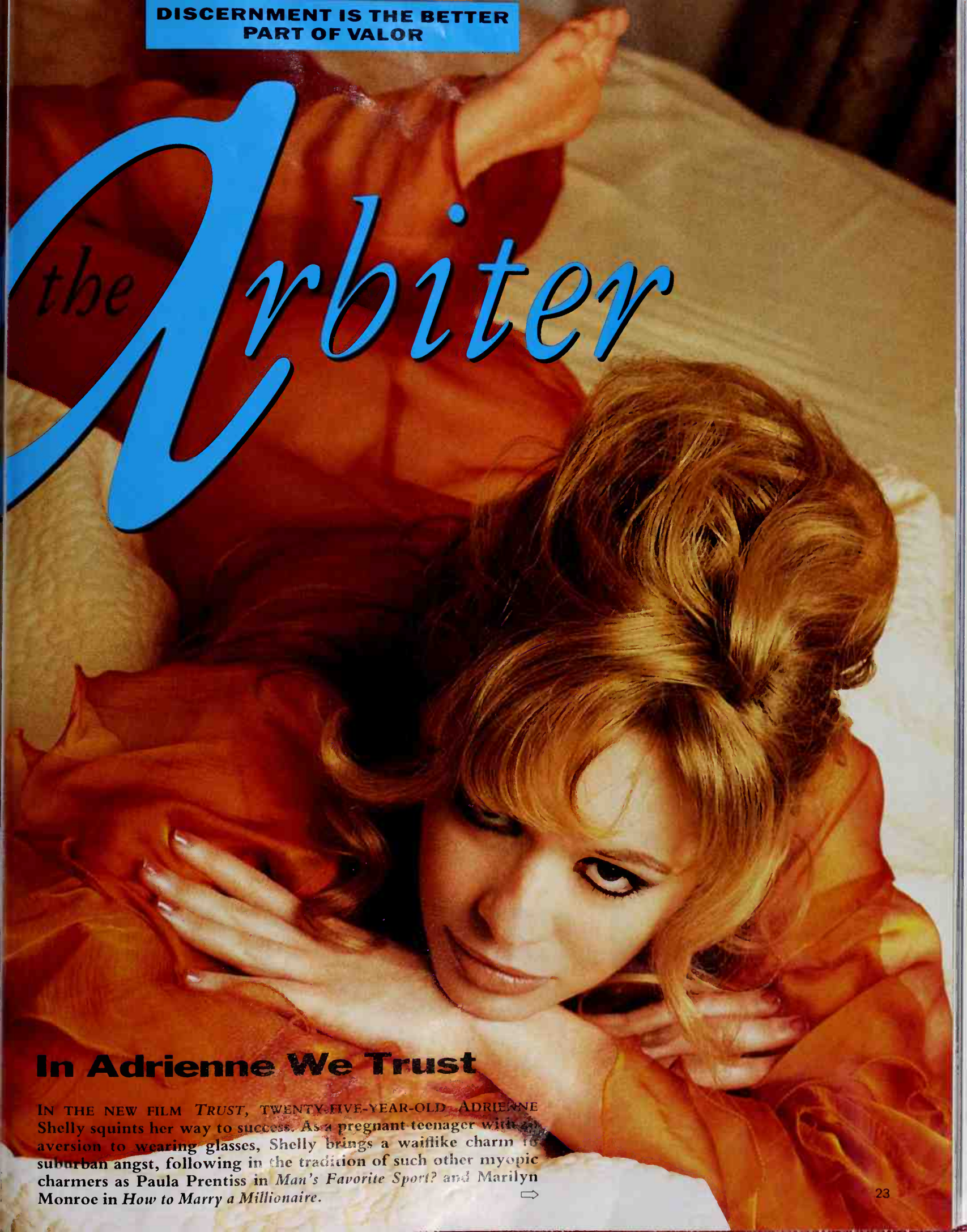


In Adrienne We Trust

IN THE NEW FILM *TRUST*, TWENTY-FIVE-YEAR-OLD ADRIENNE Shelly squints her way to success. As a pregnant teenager with an aversion to wearing glasses, Shelly brings a waiflike charm to suburban angst, following in the tradition of such other myopic charmers as Paula Prentiss in *Man's Favorite Sport?* and Marilyn Monroe in *How to Marry a Millionaire*. ⇨

The eyeglasses bit is something Shelly brought to the role, since in real life she refuses to wear them—not out of vanity but out of a preference to see the world "in soft focus, like an abstract painting."

Director Hal Hartley liked that quirk so much that he wrote it into the script of *Trust,* the second film the two have worked on together (last year's *The Unbelievable Truth* was the first). "The central image I had of her character's transformation was of her glasses," Hartley says. "She needed to see better to bring things into focus and learn how to take control of her life."

With or without glasses, the strawberry blond Long Island–born actress is decidedly seeing clearly—and taking control.

Shelly describes feeling encased in a cocoon of bashfulness as a child, emerging fully only when acting in plays at summer camp. "It was the only time I wasn't shy and wasn't afraid and I found success," she says.

But after Shelly graduated from high school, her mother nixed the idea of taking acting classes. "She didn't think acting was the kind of career that brings happiness to many people."

Enrolled at Boston University to study filmmaking, she left halfway through, defying her family's wishes and moving to New York City. She took her father's first name as her last (he died when she was twelve) and began taking acting courses at the Roundabout Theatre Company. "I feel most alive and have the most courage when I take risks," she says.

This fall brings the release of Joan Micklin Silver's *Stepkids,* in which Shelly plays Griffin Dunne's very pregnant younger girlfriend. Laughing as she points out her pregnancies in two of her three featured roles, the five-foot-two, ninety-pound actress exclaims, "I guess you could say I'm pregnant with all these possibilities—and it's starting to show." —*J. N.*

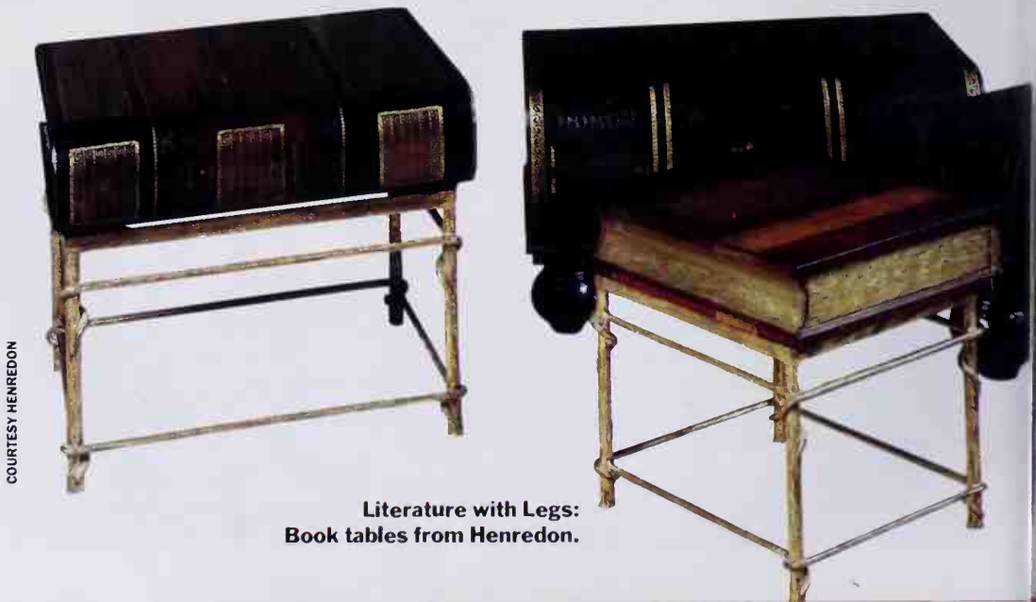
Czar Alexander I bought the painting from Josephine's estate in 1814.

Power Painting

Josephine, empress of France, acquired the van der Heyden as part of her divorce settlement from Napoleon.

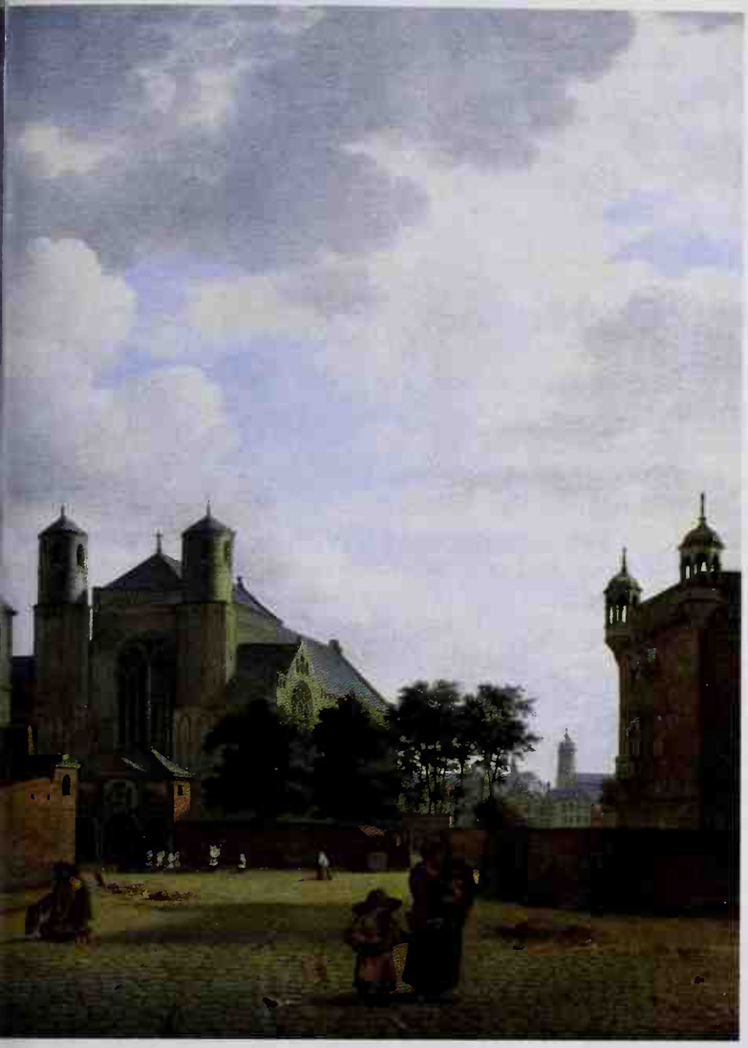
THE LINEAGE OF *A Square with Motifs from Cologne,* the seventeenth-century cityscape by the celebrated Dutch master Jan van der Heyden, reads like a record of the flow of power and history in Europe. The picture's current owner, New York art dealer Martin Zimet, says of the old master painting's exceptional past, "One would be hard-pressed to find a work of art that has a longer or more distinguished chain of owners. Whoever was the most powerful person in the world at any given point in history has owned it. The picture has always been in rich, important collections." Indeed, few works of art can match the royal—and even imperial—provenance of the painting, now being offered for about $4 million at Zimet's gallery, French & Co. Inc., at 17 East Sixty-fifth Street.

Executed about 1680, *A Square with Motifs from Cologne* was retained by the artist until his death in 1712, when it passed to his wife, Sara. The painting started to gain some of its royal cachet when it became the property of Landgrave Wilhelm VIII, the princely ruler of the small German state of Hesse-Cassel in the mid-eighteenth century. Prince Wilhelm VIII died in exile and was succeeded by his son Friedrich II, whose son Wilhelm IX lost the painting to Napoleon's acquisitive troops in



COURTESY HENREDON

Literature with Legs: Book tables from Henredon.



***A Square with Motifs from Cologne,* by Jan van der Heyden (ca. 1680, oil on canvas, 14½" x 20").**

The painting might still be hanging in the picture gallery of the czars, the Hermitage in Leningrad, were it not for Stalin's decision in the early 1930s to sell off many of Russia's art treasures in order to fill its coffers. Being among the parceled patrimony, the van der Heyden surfaced in 1932 in Berlin, where it was sold to Baron Heinrich Thyssen-Bornemisza, father of the present baron and Swiss-based art collector. After the senior baron's death in 1947, the painting was inherited by his son Stephan, who sold it in 1965; it then passed through a succession of private collections.

"Whoever buys this painting will have to stand very tall to be in such company," says Zimet. But, he emphasizes, "it's a great work of art. That's the main thing. A royal provenance is a very valuable asset. Still, at the end of the day one has to look at the painting—not just its history."

—*Carlos A. Rosas*

1806. The van der Heyden's next home was Malmaison—Napoleon and Josephine's love nest just outside Paris, which the emperor allowed Josephine to keep after their divorce. The erstwhile empress's passion for exotic flowers and plants left her estate with substantial debts, so following her death in 1814, the van der Heyden was promptly sold—to one of her ex-husband's most powerful enemies, Czar Alexander I.

Table Talk

WHEN HENREDON ADDED THESE handsome tables to its spring line, it never realized what a hit they would make at the April International Furniture Market in High Point, North Carolina. Like fine first-edition volumes, the two accessory tables and two cocktail tables—$865 to $1,865—are crafted from dark red, brown, or multicolor leather with gold hand-tooling. Gold leaf "pages" conceal a single drawer, lined with authentic bookbinder's marbleized end-sheet paper, that pulls open from the spine. As the tables become available in fine department stores this month, Henredon may just find it has a best-seller on its hands.

—*Mary Kelly*

Henredon's book tables are available beginning this month through Henredon Furniture Industries and fine department stores nationwide. To find the Henredon dealer nearest you, call 800-444-3682.

Acquiring Minds . . .

WANT TO OWN

LEO CASTELLI, *Castelli Gallery, New York*

"In the early fifties, I was interested in works by Mondrian, Giacometti, and Léger, but I had very little money. Back then I was involved with members of the New York School, such as de Kooning and Pollock, while I was getting my start as an art consultant. One day the secretary at the Nierendorf Gallery let me know they had a 1919 Mondrian for sale for two thousand dollars. I knew I would have to manage somehow to buy it, so I asked my brother, a lawyer, to lend me the money. About ten years later I sold it for eight thousand dollars to a collector by the name of Dr. Israel to help finance my Seventy-seventh Street gallery. Around 1980 Dr. Israel sold the same Mondrian for four hundred and fifty thousand dollars, and he told me he was disappointed with that price. Now I think that first purchase of mine could bring almost three million dollars. I don't really remember if I ever repaid my brother."

NINA GRISCOM, *socialite and host of HBO Entertainment News*

"In 1985 I went to Grays Antique Market in London to look for tortoiseshell objects, which I loved at the time. There I saw my first gold Victorian heart lock: it was like a charm with a little opening as if for a key. The heart closed on a gold bracelet, and the dealer was asking two hundred dollars. After buying that first one, I was hooked and bought others. The problem was that I kept losing them. My husband, Daniel, was aware I had lost most of the heart locks, so three years ago he surprised me with a charm bracelet that had sixteen of them! He had collected them for me very quietly for years. I haven't lost one of these yet—especially since a gold gate bracelet with a heart lock now sells for over two thousand dollars at James Robinson."

—*Compiled by Carlos A. Rosas*

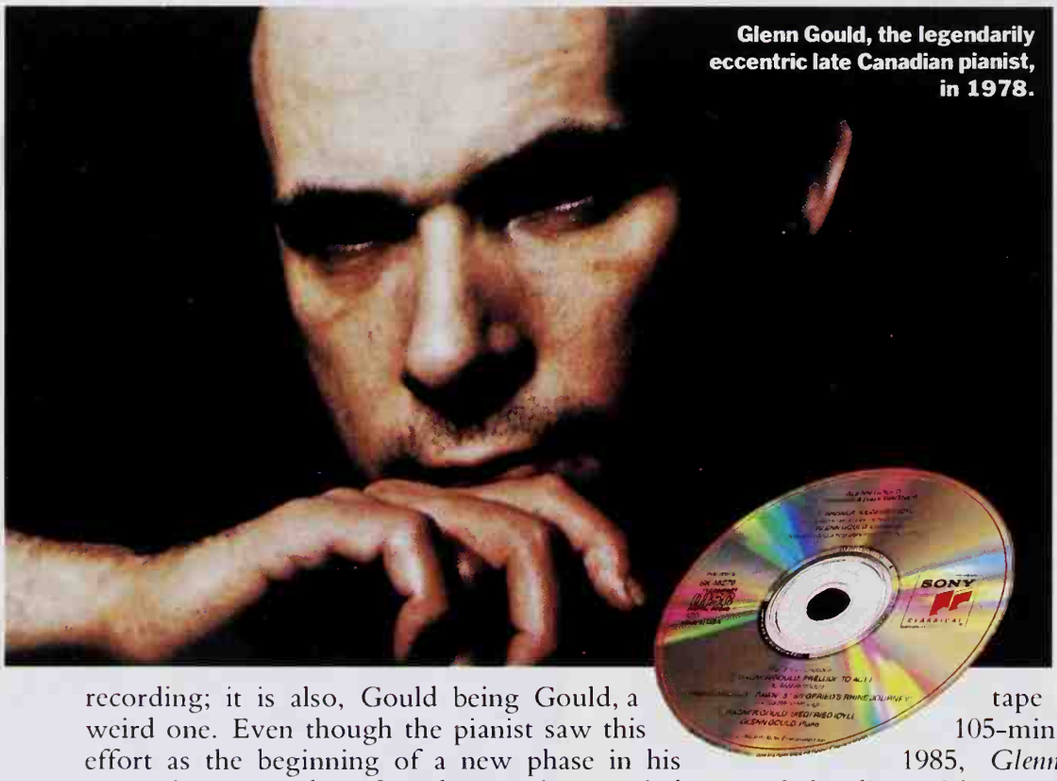
MARY HILLIARD

RECORDINGS

The Gould Variations

DURING HIS LIFE, GLENN GOULD SEEMED THE MOST INtriguing of all musicians, and nothing in the years since his unexpected death from a stroke in 1982, nine days after his fiftieth birthday, has changed that perception. Otto Friedrich's pedestrian 1989 biography hardly suggests, let alone explains, the way in which Gould's playing sounded unbound by any physical limitation. Nor do the memoirs of Gould's record producer, Andrew Kazdin, give us an insight into a mind that could live profoundly inside sound. And what are we to make of the pianist's own writings, in which paeans to Petula Clark and Barbra Streisand, tacky interviews with himself, and some pretty hokey attempts at humor are dotted with dazzling reflections on modern civilization?

But now, with the long-awaited release of *Glenn Gould Conducts Wagner's Siegfried Idyll* (Sony Classical CD)—his 1982 debut recording as a conductor, as well as the last recording he made—Gould's vision seems so enigmatic that we may never comprehend its depth. This is a remarkable recording; it is also, Gould being Gould, a weird one. Even though the pianist saw this effort as the beginning of a new phase in his eccentric career—that of conductor—it can only be regarded as what it was, his farewell to the world.



Glenn Gould, the legendarily eccentric late Canadian pianist, in 1978.

Gould's career was launched with his 1955 recording of Bach's Goldberg Variations, the most spontaneous and joyful-sounding Bach that had ever been put on disc. Displaying a startling percussive touch, a clarity of contrapuntal line, and a boundless propulsive energy unlike that of any other pianist, the handsome, boyish-looking Canadian seemed to be discovering something new and wondrous with each variation, dramatically stumbling onto a vision of infinity by the monumental twenty-fifth.

With *Siegfried Idyll,* Gould went even further in a performance of unprecedented slowness, as if seeking the infinitesimal and the infinite at the same time. Gould can seem to stop time on a note while never allowing the musicians to lose the structural tension. The playing itself is not particularly beautiful, but the effect is, even though Gould elongates a piece that Wagner had presented as an innocent little surprise serenade for his new wife, Cosima, into something barely resembling the composer's intentions. But then, Gould *made* music in the literal sense, like a composer.

This CD is the first of what Sony promises will be a flow of previously unreleased Gould recordings, many from broadcasts, along with a Gould video collection, to commemorate the pianist on the tenth anniversary of his death next year. At the moment, though, the Gould discography is a mess: much is out of print (including those wonderfully perverse Mozart sonata performances that are a perfect antidote to this year's precious Mozart worship), and what is in print often overlaps in different collections. A case in point, this new release is filled in with Gould's astonishing Wagner piano transcriptions, which already are included in Sony's three-CD set *The Glenn Gould Legacy, Volume 3.*

Other labels, however, are beating Sony to the punch. Music & Arts Programs of America, devoted to issuing historic performances on CD, has lately been putting out some arresting Gould broadcast recitals, sometimes featuring works he never recorded commercially, such as his slow and searching 1967 rendition of Beethoven's *Hammerklavier* Sonata. Philips Classics has released on one videodisc in Japan—but not, alas, in the West—two extraordinarily beautiful and touching half-hour Canadian television documentaries, *Glenn Gould: Off the Record* and *On the Record,* made in 1959 and featuring an irresistible yet already visionary Gould. More readily available, on a Kultur videotape or Pioneer Artists video laser disc, is a 105-minute Canadian television documentary from 1985, *Glenn Gould: A Portrait,* which is clumsily directed but contains much priceless footage of the pianist (including some from the 1959 programs).

Those videos are crucial to getting a feel for both the sheer brilliance and the sheer peculiarity of Gould. Watching him—seated on his low chair, slouched over the piano, his fingers seemingly energized by electricity, his manner angelic and devilish at the same time—is one of music's great experiences. And those many hours of Sony videos soon to come are among the century's major musical legacies. —*Mark Swed*

Glenn Gould Conducts Wagner's Siegfried Idyll, *on Sony Classical CD, about $14.98.*

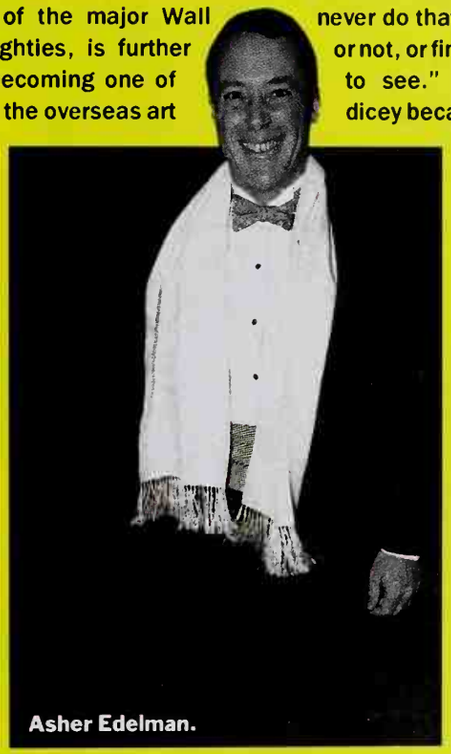
the ear

WHAT WE HEARD THIS MONTH

by Richard Johnson

EDELMAN ABOUT TOWN

ASHER EDELMAN, one of the major Wall Street players of the eighties, is further testing his acumen by becoming one of the most visible forces in the overseas art market.



Asher Edelman.

The former New Yorker, now operating from his headquarters in Lausanne, Switzerland, is not only one of the world's most voracious collectors but also deals in art as he once traded stocks—with hard business savvy and no emotion.

Edelman's Canal Capital Corporation owns the Daedalus Gallery on Fifty-seventh Street in New York City, which has a strong specialty in Greek, Roman, and Egyptian antiquities, and is going global by opening a Daedalus operation in Europe. In collaboration with the Salander-O'Reilly Galleries on Seventy-ninth Street in Manhattan, he represents the artist Jules Olitski. And in June he opened his own museum of modern art on Lake Geneva in Lausanne.

The Musée d'Art Contemporain, Fondation Asher Edelman was launched with a huge party that was widely attended. Among the guests: **JEFF KOONS** with his new bride, Italian legislator and ex–porn queen Ilona Staller (better known as **CICCIOLINA**), **LEO CASTELLI, ILEANA SONNABEND, THOMAS AMMANN, MARY BOONE,** and **LARRY GAGOSIAN.**

The museum's first show was assembled from Edelman's own eclectic collection. But one of the next exhibitions will be a major retrospective of Robert Mapplethorpe's photos, which is bound to shock the stuffy burghers of Bern and Basel.

Edelman recently called the Musée d'Art Contemporain "very much of the edge." Nevertheless, he doesn't expect a Swiss version of Jesse Helms to come forth and try to close it. "The Swiss would never do that. But whether they come or not, or find it repugnant, we'll have to see." The situation could be dicey because the City of Lausanne helped him find the abandoned dye factory that he converted into the museum.

Edelman has also ventured into computers and is running Datapoint, an American company he acquired and moved to Paris.

"I haven't attempted a takeover in two years," said the busy entrepreneur. "That was eight years of my career. Now I'm more interested in management."

Edelman was particularly pleased that after a very rocky period, Datapoint had four profitable quarters in a row despite the economic downturn. "I'm having a lot of fun," he said.

TOP CO-OP

Okay, we're in the nineties. We're in a recession. The real estate market is supposed to be in the dumpster. Conspicuous consumption is out. But that doesn't mean that **ANNE EISENHOWER,** interior decorator and granddaughter of Ike, and her husband, Austrian moneyman **WOLFGANG**

Anne Eisenhower and Wolfgang Flottl's new apartment cost them $8 million.

FLOTTL, can't buy themselves an $8 million Manhattan pad.

The apartment, in one of the finest buildings on Park Avenue, has at least a dozen rooms. The neighbors include **SAUL** and **GAYFRYD STEINBERG, HENRY KRAVIS** and **CAROLYNE ROEHM,** ITT chairman **RAND ARASKOG,** Walter Annenberg's sister **ENID HAUPT,** and Time Warner chairman and co-CEO **STEVE ROSS.**

By the time you read this, the happy couple should have been approved by the co-op board and be busy decorating the place, which is guaranteed to be featured in one of the tonier shelter magazines about a year from now.

REFINED TASTES

Another house worthy of a tour is the mansion in Aspen, Colorado, of fifty-one-year-old billionaire bachelor **DAVID KOCH.**

Koch, whose father, Frederick, developed a revolutionary oil-refining process, recently had Christine Hawley, wife of Mike Aaron, the owner of New York wine and spirits emporium Sherry-Lehmann, design and oversee construction of a state-of-the-art wine cellar for his Coors-country retreat. Once it was installed, Koch (pronounced coke) had it stocked with cases of the finest vintages money can buy. Is that what John Denver meant by "Rocky Mountain High"? □

Billionaire bachelor David Koch.

THE COCKTAIL HOUR

Joie de Vivre in a Bottle

A delectable European fruit brandy, eau-de-vie is now being distilled in the United States.

by Joni Miller

WHILE OTHERS HAVE BEEN GRAPPLING with grappa and musing over marc, a small circle of savvy sommeliers and seekers of the exquisite have discovered eaux-de-vie ("waters of life"), a group of powerfully intense, crystal-clear true-fruit brandies that are breathtakingly evocative of the fruits' essence. Long a favorite European after-dinner drink, these ethereal-tasting and expensive liquors date back to the Middle Ages, when alchemists who failed to find the elixir of everlasting life wrought distilling magic of another kind with fruits and herbs.

Eaux-de-vie, which are radically different from very sweet cordials and colored, fruit-flavored brandies, fall into a category the French call *alcools blancs,* or "white spirits." Though it is possible to distill virtually any berry or noncitrus fruit into a colorless brandy, eaux-de-vie are typically made from pears (poire), cherries (kirsch), raspberries (framboise), strawberries (fraise), blueberries (myrtille), blue plums (quetsch), and yellow plums (mirabelle). More arcane examples produced only in Europe and rarely, if ever, found in the United States are made from holly berries, pine buds, currants, and elderberries; it is said that there are more than forty varieties of this potent brandy, which is bottled at 40 percent alcohol in the United States and at a slightly higher level in Europe.

Until recently, the finest eaux-de-vie came from the lush, fruit-producing regions of Alsace, the Black Forest of southern Germany, and northern Switzerland. The top-notch brands to look for in U.S. liquor stores included Trimbach, Schladerer, Jean Danflou, Ova, and Massenez, famed for its Poire Williams, known as Poire Prisonnière, with a whole pear immersed in a sexy curved bottle. But in the past few years, a quirky band of small, artisanal distillers in northern California and Oregon have dedicated themselves to producing domestic eaux-de-vie that are more than a match for their European counterparts. Their pleasurable presence on the scene has become welcome news.

Appropriately canonized in *The Wine Spectator* as "the patron saint of American eau-de-vie," Jörg Rupf, owner and founder of St. George Spirits in northern California, was the first producer of the liquor in America, releasing his initial bottling in 1984. "Nobody really knew what eau-de-vie was," says Rupf of the early days. "It was a link in the culinary tradition of Europe that somehow never made it here. Americans were baffled by it."

In the beginning, Rupf spent almost as much time explaining what it was as he did producing it. "It takes a certain kind of stubbornness to do these things," he says good-naturedly, "but grappa [a colorless Italian brandy distilled from grape skins and seeds] helped the whole awareness of a white spirit."

A former attorney in West Germany's Ministry of Culture, Rupf's roots are in eau-de-vie country: he was born in Alsace and grew up in the Black Forest, where as a child, he helped his grandfather distill the family's small brandy output. His dry, elegant line of eaux-de-vie includes Williams pear made with Bartlett pears from Mendocino and Lake counties, kirsch and framboise made from Washington State produce, and quince using fruit from Marysville.

Each 750-milliliter bottle captures the intense essence of between twenty and forty pounds of fresh fruit. Using European equipment and modern California wine-making techniques, Rupf crushes the fruit at its zenith of ripeness, carefully fermenting it with special yeast strains in temperature-controlled stainless steel tanks for several weeks. Once the process is completed, the liquid is distilled in small batches in Holstein copper pot stills known as alembics, which are specially designed to preserve the potency and complexity of the aroma. The resultant eau-de-vie distillate is then aged in glass or stainless steel containers, which preserve the brilliant-

Ca' del Solo's Prunus, a fruit brandy made from apricot, cherry, and plum.

St. George Spirits' raspberry eau-de-vie.

ly clear appearance and further develop the well-rounded bouquets.

When one uncorks a bottle of St. George Spirits, a remarkable, almost ferociously gorgeous aroma suffuses the air. Rupf's bottles are objects of beauty on the outside as well—slim, clear Alsatian-style flutes graced with lovely labels created from watercolor illustrations. And his eaux-de-vie are a revelation to the palate, each tasting more like the fruit than the fruit itself.

Not too far away, at the award-winning Bonny Doon Vineyard in Santa Cruz, which is internationally famous for its "exploration of all permutations and combinations of Rhone varietals in the New World," owner Randall Grahm, a friend of Rupf's, is slowly and thoughtfully branching out into eaux-de-vie. An inventive vintner with impeccable taste and an honorable attitude toward traditional distilling methods, Grahm's most recent eau-de-vie release, available in extremely limited quantities, is an absolute knockout. Named Prunus, after the genus of the triumvirate of fruits from which it's distilled, and bottled under the name Ca' del Solo, it is the first multifruit eau-de-vie produced in the U.S. Redolent of California apricots and Oregon cherries, with a soupçon of plum, the flavor and aroma of Prunus vibrate the senses. Grahm plans more varieties in the future and has planted a "research orchard" of esoteric fruits.

The secret to a perfect eau-de-vie lies in what Oregonian Stephen McCarthy calls the "one-day window of perfection," the point at which the fruit reaches its absolute pinnacle. McCarthy ought to know. Six years ago, this persistent entrepreneur started Clear Creek Distillery, using pears and apples grown in his family's orchards on the slopes of Mount Hood. "A good pear brandy," says McCarthy, "is as closely linked to the fruit as good cabernet sauvignon or Pinot wine is linked to the grape."

A dynamic promoter, McCarthy, like Rupf, is dedicated to educating American palates to eau-de-vie and has been known to conduct impromptu taste tests, matching his products against European ones at respected restaurants across America. McCarthy's first eau-de-vie, a pear brandy made with his own Bartletts, hit the market in 1986. Since then, its fiery fragrance has become a presence at such culinary shrines to fine dining as L.A.'s Spago, Charlie Trotter's in Chicago, Masa's in San Francisco, and New York's Bouley, Le Cirque, Le Bernardin, "21" Club, and Union Square Cafe.

McCarthy, who acquired his expertise in traditional small-scale distilling techniques after almost two dozen trips to Alsace and the Black Forest and some noncompetitive encouragement from Rupf, currently produces only three thousand cases of pear brandy annually, using German-made pot stills. Small quantities of his other eau-de-vie, a powerful, complex framboise, will be available this fall. Like his fellow distillers in northern California, McCarthy is still experimenting, with cherry and

blue plum.

Eau-de-vie is traditionally served as a *digestif,* the ultimate palate-cleansing after-dinner drink, you might say, or as an accompaniment to dessert and coffee. Sipped from a small snifter or sherry glass, it may be served either at room temperature (one European preference) or poured cold into a room-temperature glass (favored by many Americans). Either way is considered correct, say the American distillers, most of whom stash theirs at home in the freezer. And the shelf life is almost infinite, as long as the bottle is kept firmly corked and away from direct light.

Relishing it neat, says Rupf, is not the only option for enjoyment. The French favor *café canard,* dipping a sugar cube in eau-de-vie and allowing it to melt in the mouth while drinking coffee. And the Swiss indulge in *café fertig,* or "finished coffee," pouring the spirit directly into hot coffee, where the voluptuousness of the fruit blossoms and the volatile alcohol softens.

With a single swallow of eau-de-vie one samples the splendors of an entire orchard in an almost cosmic rush. Perhaps it is this ethereal insight into nature that transforms producers into poets. "There is something almost sacramental about the solemn imbibition of a fruit essence," muses Grahm. "One sees into the very heart of the matter, the stone, the pith, a summing up, a recapitulation." □

AN EXPLORER'S RESOURCE GUIDE TO AMERICAN EAUX-DE-VIE

American-distilled eaux-de-vie are made in small batches, with most firms producing fewer than 4,000 cases annually. To find a store in your area that carries a particular product, call the distiller directly.

- ***Jörg Rupf, St. George Spirits, 2900 Main St., Alameda, CA 94501; 415-769-1601. Rupf makes Williams pear, framboise, kirsch, and quince eaux-de-vie, as well as grappas, marc, and true-fruit liqueurs.***
- ***Stephen R. McCarthy, Clear Creek Distillery, 1430 NW Twenty-third Ave., Portland, OR 97210; 503-248-9470. McCarthy distills Williams-pear brandy and framboise eau-de-vie. Other specialties include grappa and a Calvados-like apple brandy aged for two years in Limousin oak.***
- ***Randall Grahm, Ca' del Solo, Bonny Doon Vineyard, 10 Pine Flat Road, Santa Cruz, CA 95060; 408-425-3625. The firm's debut triple-fruit eau-de-vie, Prunus, has recently been released; others, including a nectarine version, are in experimental stages. Grahm also makes an infusion, marc, and grappas.***

In general, prices range from fifteen to twenty dollars for a 375-milliliter bottle and twenty-five to thirty-five dollars for a 750-milliliter bottle.

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THE PENINSULA GROUP

Courtly Behavior

Henry VIII so loved court tennis that he refused to cancel his daily game—even for Anne Boleyn's beheading.

by Sandra J. Weber

IN ANSWER TO HIS MONARCH'S QUERY "What treasure, uncle?" in Shakespeare's *Henry V,* Exeter describes the French dauphin's gift: "Tennis balls, my liege." Not today's canned variety, but handmade ones like those still used to play the game the British call "real" tennis and Americans refer to as court tennis.

The king who aced the French at Agincourt was only one of many royal aficionados. Henry VIII was said to have refused to cancel his daily game even for Anne Boleyn's beheading.

Seven centuries after thirteenth-century monks first vented their frustrations by hitting balls off their monastery courtyard's angled walls with their bare hands, court tennis remains largely a game of the rich and aristocratic, with fewer than three thousand players worldwide. That's not likely to change, given today's million-dollar cost to build a large, irregular court complete with thirty-foot-high walls and a glass roof. Indeed, earlier this year, when Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd., a London publisher, reissued *A History of Tennis,* by E. B. Noel and J. O. M. Clark, a classic 1924 history of the game, fans on both sides of the Atlantic didn't hesitate to spend $750 for a deluxe limited copy signed by current and past world champions and bound in goatskin blocked in gold. (The trade edition is $160.)

The heavy, lopsided racquets and dead balls that help make court tennis such a challenging sport.

The differences between court tennis and lawn tennis, its nineteenth-century offspring, are manifold. Both games use the same numbers to score points, and both call the tie that is settled by winning two consecutive points "deuce," but the resemblance ends there. In court tennis the ball is served from one end of the court only, and it's theoretically possible for one player to serve an entire match. As in squash and racquetball, the ball is hit off the court's walls, but points can be scored by hitting shots into net-covered wall openings that make the game more like pinball than tennis. Today's players purchase wooden racquets from the sole supplier, Grays of Cambridge; balls are made by wrapping cotton tape around a cork, binding it tightly with string, and hand-stitching a wool cover on top.

The French, whose nobility popularized the game in the sixteenth century, continue to call it *jeu de paume* long after racquets have replaced hands. Indeed, wherever court tennis is played, Gallic phraseology endures: the spectators' gallery is the *dedans,* the angled wall on the receiving side is the *tambour,* and the small, high window opposite the service court is the *grille.*

Thomas Greevy, a U.S. senior pro at The Tuxedo Club in Tuxedo Park, New York, says court tennis requires the strategy of a chess player, the strength of a blacksmith, and the eye of a jeweler. Players consider it more challenging than all other racquet sports and get a kick out of its historic charm.

Covering the oversize court to scoop the low-bouncing ball with a heavy, lopsided racquet and handling the ball's perplexing spin are just two of the game's challenges. Even tougher is explaining the complex scoring that results in calls like "40–love, chase the door." Says Greevy, "It's a little like explaining brain surgery."

American court tennis had its heyday at the turn of the century when the country's gentry took it up. Not long after Rhode Island's Newport Casino built a court in 1880–81, others began appearing in the homes of wealthy families like the Whitneys and the Goulds.

A perfect example of the irregular court tennis playing field, complete with thirty-foot-high walls and a glass roof.

Legend has it that George Gould, the eldest son of railroad tycoon Jay Gould, humiliated once when rain spoiled his weekend with the Vanderbilts, added indoor polo and court tennis to his Lakewood, New Jersey, estate. In 1908, his son Jay won an Olympic gold medal for court tennis and six years later became the first amateur to win the world championship.

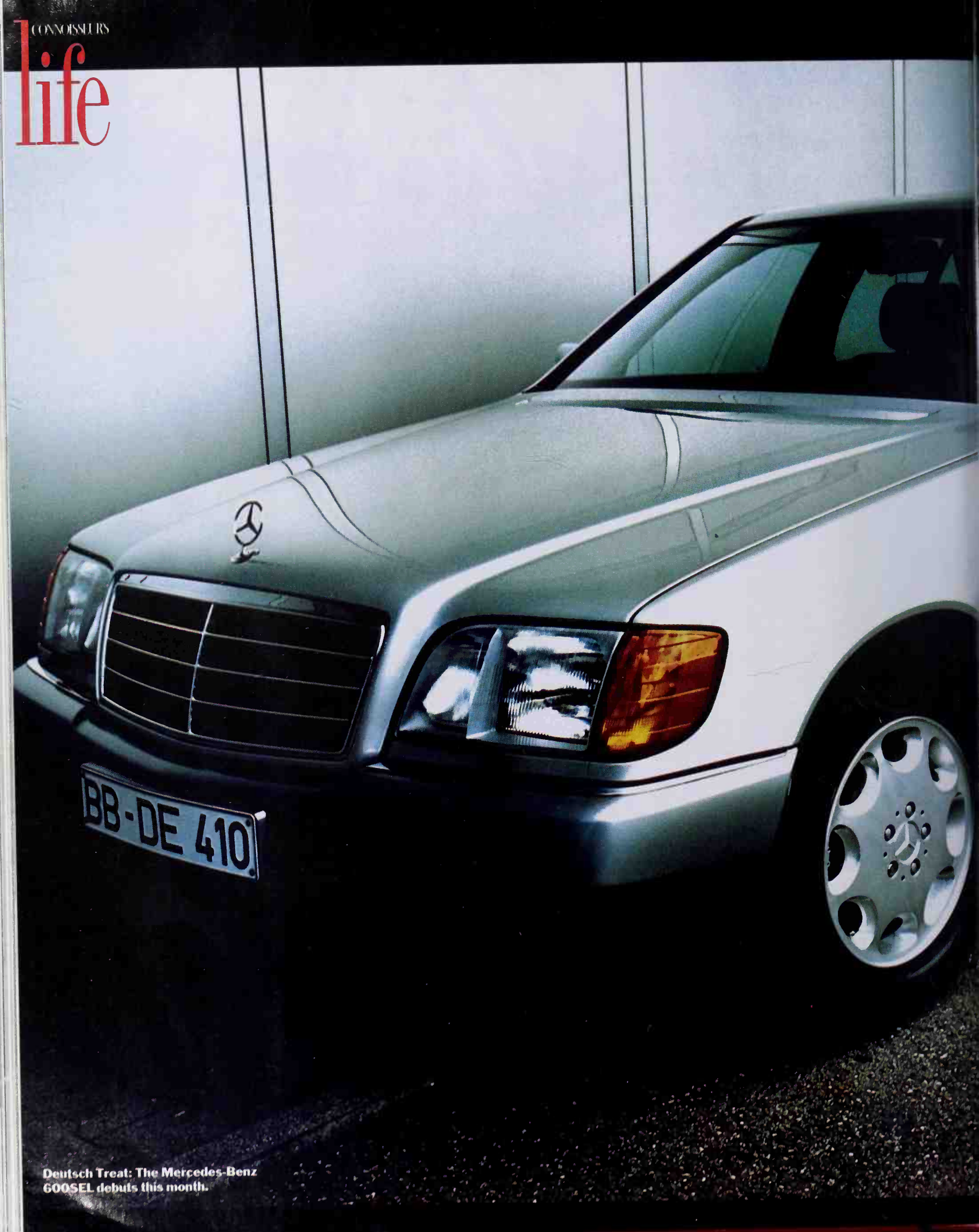
Edward Hughes, president of the United States Court Tennis Association (USCTA), who has played most courts at home and abroad, says the most elegant is at Greentree, the Manhasset, Long Island, estate of the Payson-Whitney family, one of America's wealthiest clans. There, court tennis is played every weekend on the country's last privately owned court, by descendants and intimates of the Whitneys and their Payson relations.

"The court is in impeccable condition," says Hughes. "Going there, you think you're in someone's living room."

But neither skill nor privilege alone guarantees access to the rarefied world of court tennis—Hughes says that even as USCTA president he plays at Greentree only when invited. Nor do they give women entrée to New York's Racquet and Tennis Club, the only facility in America with two real court tennis courts. But each May, Hughes evens the score a little by sponsoring the Anne Boleyn Memorial, a court tennis tournament for women held at the court on Gould's former estate in New Jersey, which he helped restore. The ghoulish but coveted trophy is a silver-headed hatchet. □

Grays of Cambridge, Playfair Works, Coton, Cambridge, England CB3 7PW; 44-223-893-330.

United States Court Tennis Association, Richard L. Brickley, Jr., secretary; 617-542-0896.



Deutsch Treat: The Mercedes-Benz 600SEL debuts this month.

PHOTOGRAPHED EXCLUSIVELY FOR *CONNOISSEUR* BY HANS GISSINGER

DESIGN

Driving Force

Bruno Sacco, the designer of the luxurious new Mercedes 600SEL, adds a bit of Italian flair to Germany's most powerful machine.

by Phil Patton

BRUNO SACCO, THE CHIEF DESIGNER for Mercedes-Benz, is talking about cars he admires, from the classic Mercedes Gullwing he used to own to the 1992 Cadillac Seville to the Edsel.

Yes, the Edsel, Ford's legendary sales disaster of 1958, a year when even the Mercedes had fins. Sacco came across the car at the Turin Auto Show, and the notorious "Oldsmobile sucking a lemon" caught his eye; he still owns the promotional booklet, which features a dapper young businessman standing beside the car. "It had fins," he recalls, "but not such bad fins. It was different but not outrageous."

Sacco's admiration for the Edsel is a token of his uncompromising dedication—without regard to fashion or the public—to the taste of the individual. That the Edsel failed, he says, "was not the fault of the Ford Motor Company but the fault of the American public for not appreciating it.

"Form does not *only* follow function," he insists. What then does it also follow? "*Was mir gefällt,*" he replies with a grin. "What pleases me."

And Bruno Sacco is not an easy man to please. The Italian-born-and-educated Sacco appears today wholly German, his burgherish bulk encased in a three-piece suit, his face pointed with a slightly intimidating beard that German actor Emil Jannings could have worn. At The Four Seasons restaurant in New York City not long ago, he sternly ordered his martini dry, very dry, without olive or twist, and peremptorily sent back a white wine from his native Piedmont.

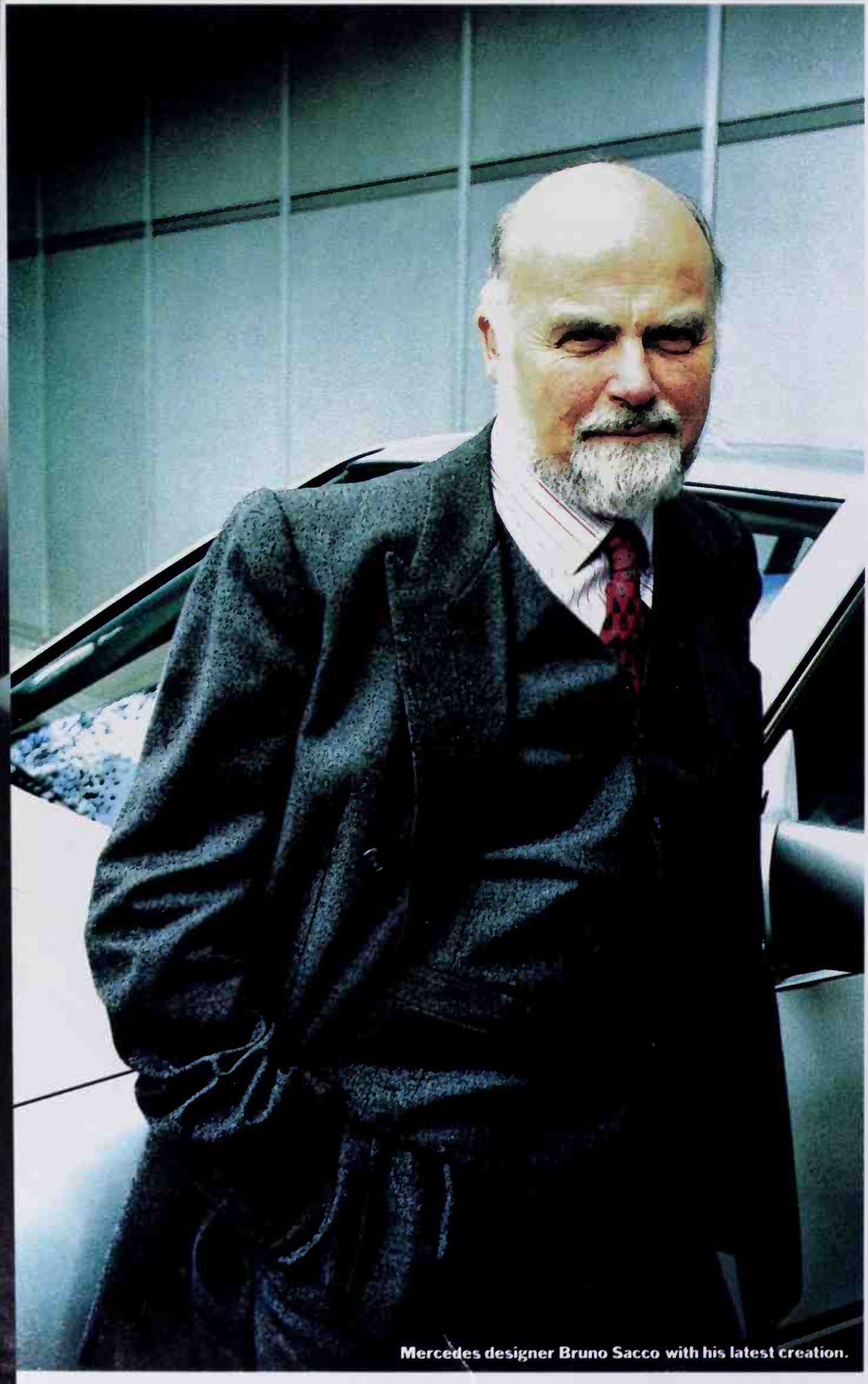
"This building," he says of Mies van der Rohe's Seagram Building, an icon of functionalism, "probably began as a sketch of a form that pleased the architect. Then he found a function for it."

If the shapes that please Sacco are in the tradition of the Italian *carrozzeria* (body shop) where he worked in his youth, the idea of function was provided by the Germans. In 1958, the year of the Edsel, Sacco drove a little Fiat 500, straining and protesting through the Alps, from Turin to Stuttgart, where he went to work for Daimler-Benz's brand-new design department. By 1975, he was head of the department for Daimler-Benz (Mercedes's parent company), reshaping its cars, softening their lines, smoothing their aerodynamics—giving their Teutonic bodies some Italian style.

Auto designers mix rivalry and respect in their dealings with one another. Once a year, they all get together at the Concours in Pebble Beach, California—the world's most prestigious car show. "We talk about the past, about great designers of old, about women and weather. But we do not talk about the present or future," says Sacco.

Peers, from Ford's Jack Telnack to Sergio Pininfarina, are quick to name Sacco among the best. They also agree his job is one of the hardest: the automobile whose slogan is Engineered Like No Other Car in the World is built to last; its look must last as well. In the United States, the car has been joined by the lower-priced Japanese Lexus, Infiniti, and Acura luxury cars. BMW's latest models began arriving two years ago. And although the Japanese introduce models every three or four years, a Mercedes may be six years in the making.

That is why the cars Mercedes-Benz is bringing to the United States this October are so important. "It will de-



Mercedes designer Bruno Sacco with his latest creation.

fine our look for the rest of the century," Sacco says of the S-Class, introduced in March at the Geneva auto show. Known within the company as the W-140, the line features what Detroit would call Mercedes's "flagship": the 600SEL, a seventeen-foot-long cruiser whose aluminum V-12 engine produces 400 horsepower's worth of Autobahn-appropriate steam. The windows are double paned for insulation. The vehicle offers a self-adjusting "active ride control" and traction control that distributes power to the wheels in the most effective proportions. It is, Bruno Sacco says with a characteristic absence of false modesty, "the best car in the world." It is certainly Daimler-Benz's latest contender for that title. (Sadly, it will not be available in the U.S. until 1992.)

In spring 1992, production will begin on the even sleeker coupe version—a big brother to 1989's SL convertibles—with hood swooping down to surround that trademark grille, which has been widened and lowered and rests between almost aquiline headlights.

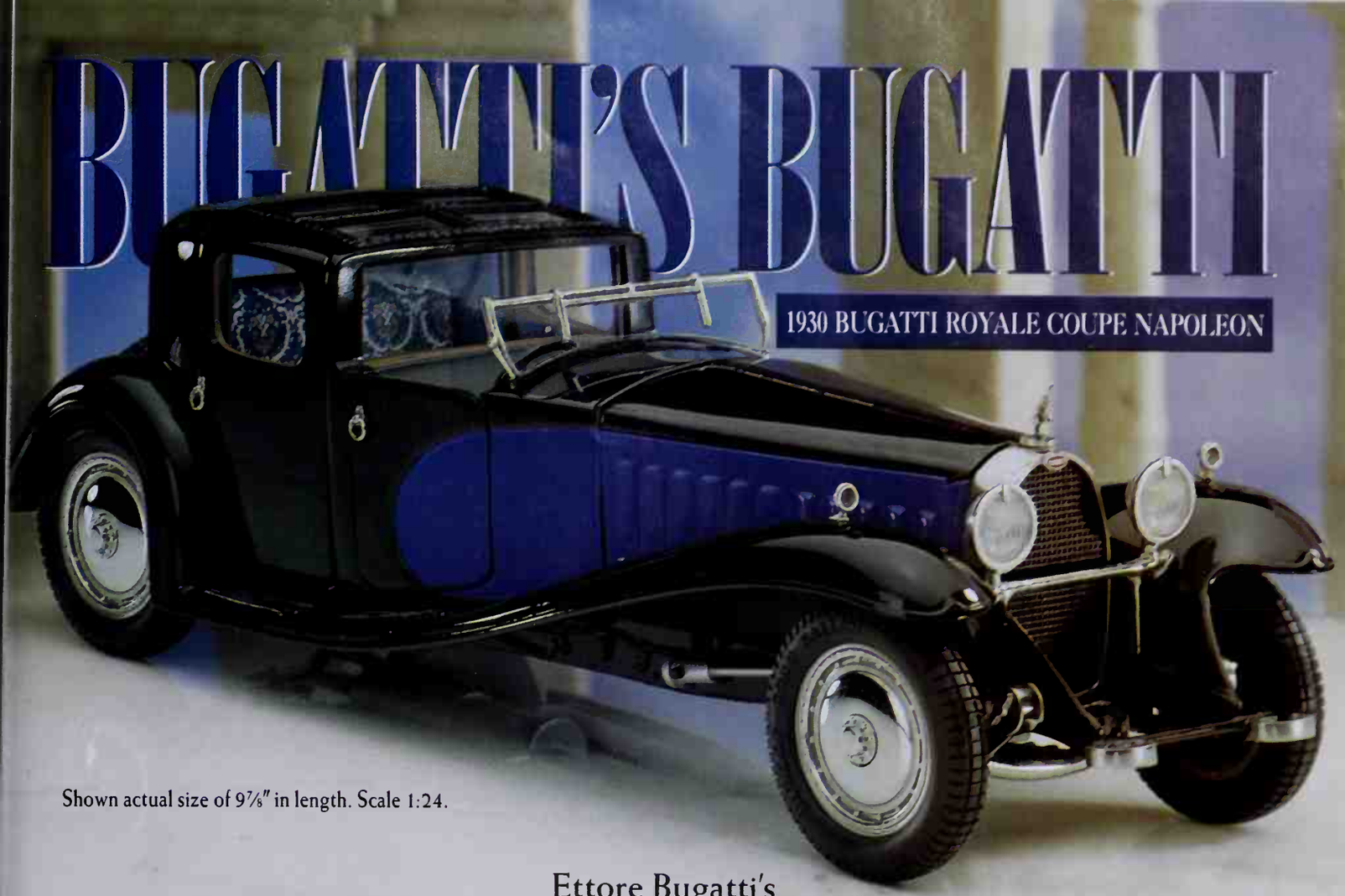
What the tail fin was to the Cadillac, the grille is to the Mercedes: a logo that cannot be abandoned—"they would accuse me of sabotage," Sacco says—even though it is strictly decorative. Improved cooling systems have led many makers to drop it. But the Mercedes's grille is like the lion's mane: without physical function, except as claim to kingship.

So Sacco and his staff retained the grille, but when he redid the larger 300 series, he tilted it back, lending a leonine face to a body tapered with rounded but powerful flanks, where the diagonal junction of trunk lid and deck strikes the eye as pleasingly as a fine miter joint and enlivens the entire shape like the bold terminating stroke of a signature.

After the initial sketch for a car like the 600, Sacco works intensely for eighteen months to two years with his team, until, he says, "one day the look is right, and you know *this* is the shape." Then the engineers take a look. "We are in an ongoing war with the engineers that makes any project exciting. If something is rejected for technical reasons, usually we come up with a solution that is not only better design but better engineering." □

BUGATTI'S BUGATTI

1930 BUGATTI ROYALE COUPE NAPOLEON



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The Contemplative Gardener

Sun, soil . . . and sanctuary.

by Julie Moir Messervy

THERE ARE INNUMERABLE VARIETIES of gardens—perennial borders overflowing green lawns, artfully raked pools of gravel, paved courtyards with purling fountains, strict boxed parterres with statues and urns, wildflower meadows, vegetable patches—yet whatever shape they take, they require a union of the imagination and the hands, art and science, design and horticulture. Even though our talents and proclivities may tend toward one or the other, to be successful garden makers we must know something of both. The Japanese master of the art, having been through an arduous apprenticeship, knows how to set a stone or pluck a pine. The English mistress of vast stretches of white, blue, or gray perennials must know the myriad cultural requirements of each of her plants yet at the same time have a vision of the aesthetics of the entire composition.

For many of us, a garden is one of the few places to experience the natural world up close. However formally it is laid out, however unnatural it may appear to the untutored eye, it is still the place where we must reckon with our limitations in controlling the forces of unbridled nature. We are helpless in the face of violent windstorms such as those that in recent years knocked down four-hundred-year-old trees in England, but every day we must fight our battles with poison ivy or with slugs and woodchucks to determine who gets to the lettuce first. If we are sensitive to the needs of the natural world, then we will be successful gardeners with thumbs of green. And there is great pleasure in the sense of self-sufficiency that comes from eating our own leeks and tomatoes.

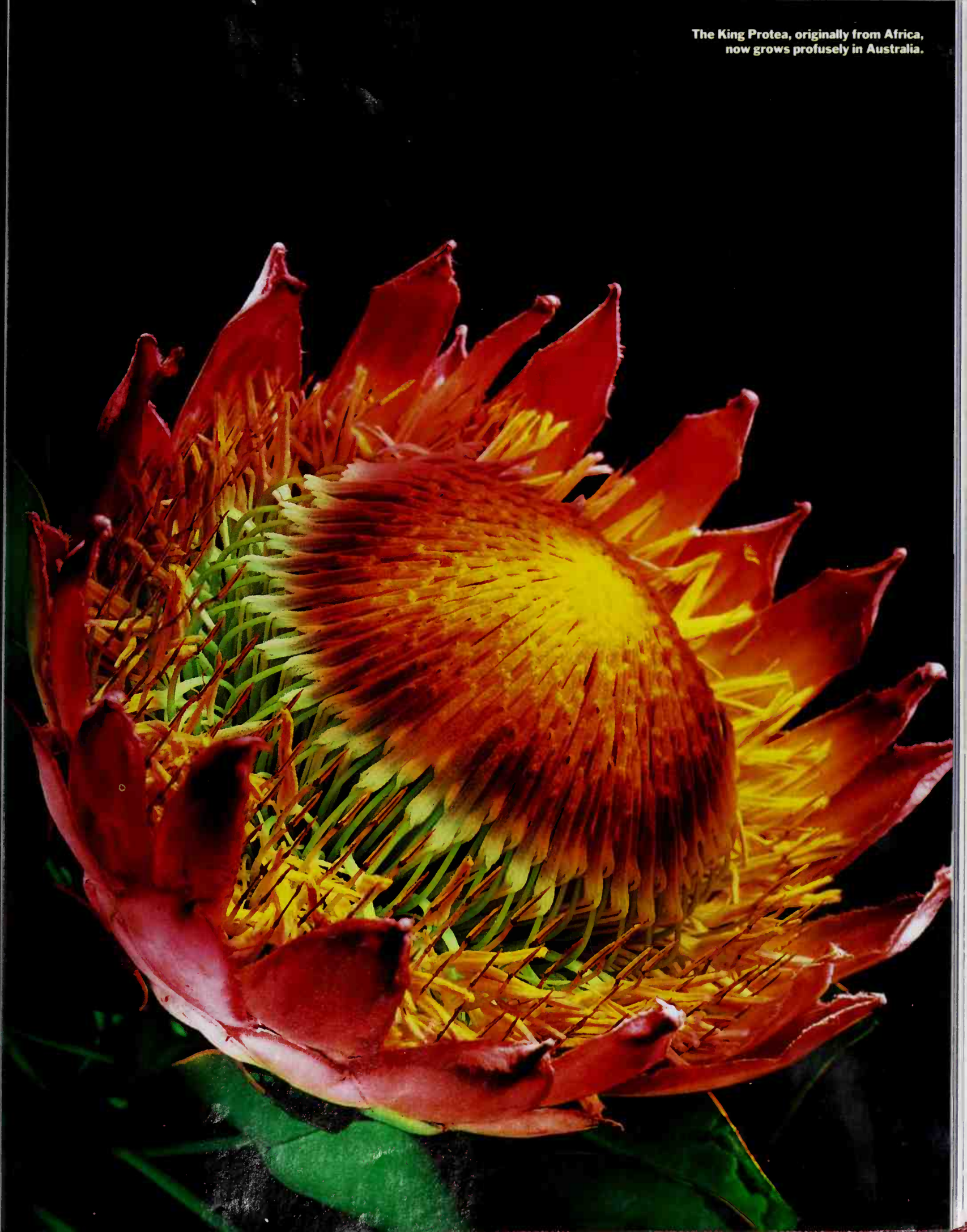
The garden is a place to share with others, especially during those brief, delicious moments when the trilliums have bloomed or the roses have shown their first buds. It is a social place—for discourse, for exchange of plants and information, for croquet, dancing, or just horsing around. It's a place for children, for hide-and-seek, for building tree forts and snow forts, for pretending to fly. It's particularly ideal for contemplation, for viewing the night sky and the full moon; for tea parties, straw hats flapping gently in summer breezes, and weddings, lending itself to tents and string quartets, Chinese lanterns and fireflies.

But it is also a place of refuge, a sanctuary from the profane world. After a long day's work, we fly through the garden gate and leave behind jangling telephones, interminable meetings, nerve-rending traffic jams, the stresses and strains that eat away at our insides and furrow our brows prematurely. Instead, we water its flowers, cut its grass, smell its fragrances, care for its needs—and our own—for a while. Burying our nose in a blossom, immersing ourself in a stand of bamboo, standing surrounded by bird song, we lose ourself in its *now*ness and forget other cares in our delight at being alone.

Most important, perhaps, a garden is a place in which to reckon with our inner being. Each culture endows its gardens with a distinctive design sensibility based on a blend of geographic, climatic, horticultural, geologic, religious, and aesthetic influences that make for idiosyncratic examples, wholly of a particular region. Yet individual gardens look different, arranged by someone to represent his or her conception of what a transcendent world might look and feel like. Emperor Shāh Jahān of India, Monet in France, and Prince Toshihito of Japan all had a dream of paradise when they made Shalimar, Giverny, and Katsura, respectively. The best are a mixture of the poetic, spiritual, and childlike needs in each one of us as expressed in three-dimensional form.

For the garden is a place of revelation, above all a place for the soul. Because no matter who you are, whatever you do in that profane world outside, within your garden you are your truest self. Your work is never done: there is always another seed to plant, furrow to sow, field to harvest.

Every month in these pages, "The Contemplative Gardener" will explore different aspects of garden design. Some philosophy, some psychology, and even some phenomenology will be mixed in with my thoughts about the perfect benches, thresholds, water features, and retreat spaces. The "how" of plantings will be discussed less than the "why." My goal is to write about gardens in a way that is both broadly useful and personally revealing to each reader. As the thirteenth-century Persian poet Rūmī wrote, "This outward stream and garden are but a reflection of the inward garden." And that applies to all of us. □

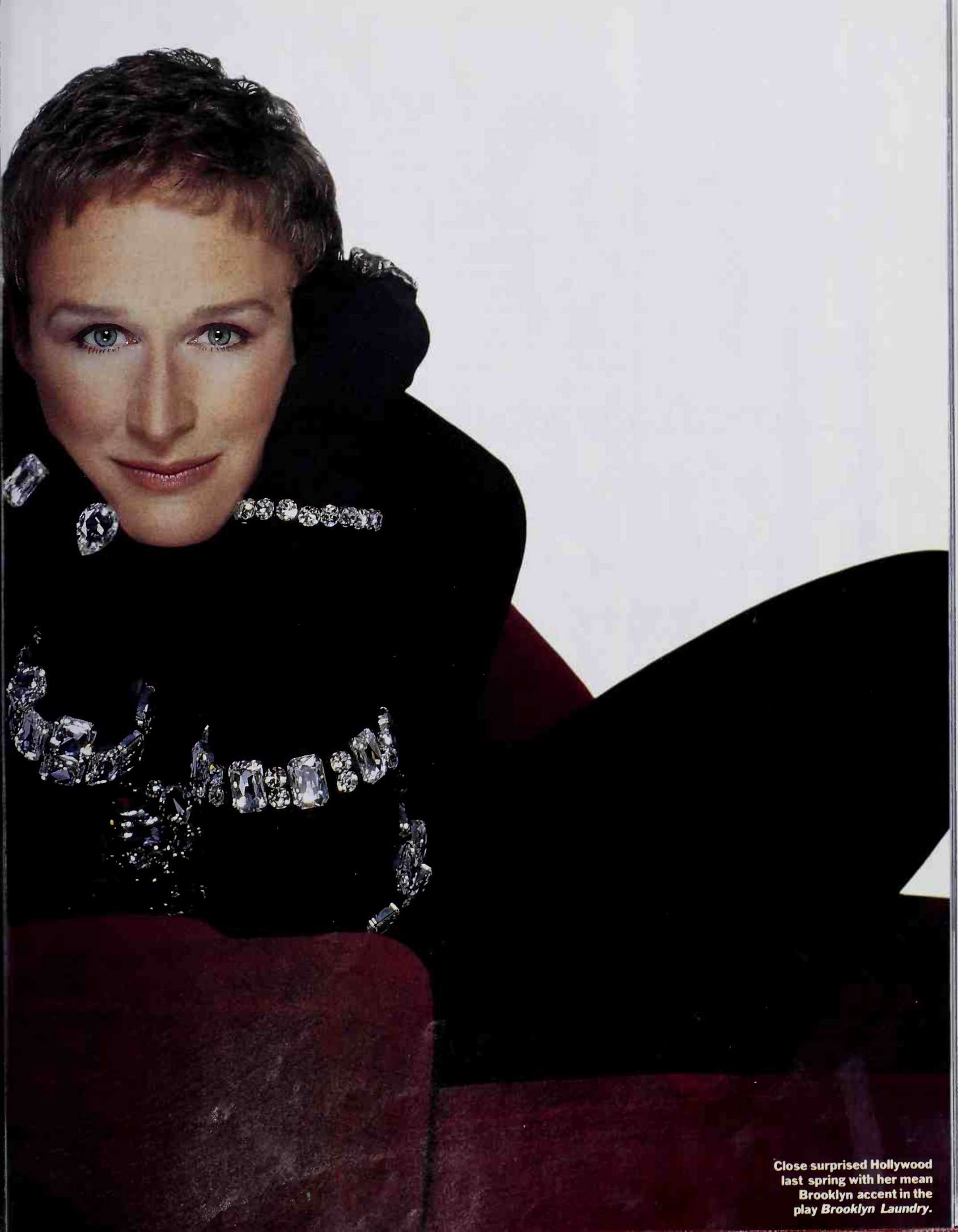


The King Protea, originally from Africa, now grows profusely in Australia.

GETTING CLOSE

Her exquisite performances have shed light on some of the darker characters in modern film history: Alex Forrest in Fatal Attraction, *the Marquise de Merteuil in* Dangerous Liaisons, *and Sunny von Bülow in* Reversal of Fortune. *But today Glenn Close wants to lighten up, which she does in the new high comedy* Meeting Venus. *STEPHEN FARBER reveals the undercurrents and ambitions of a star with a decidedly individual flare.*

PHOTOGRAPHS BY WALTER CHIN



Close surprised Hollywood last spring with her mean Brooklyn accent in the play *Brooklyn Laundry*.

AS SHE STRIDES INTO PAZZIA, A FASHIONABLE RESTAURANT on La Cienega Boulevard in Los Angeles, Glenn Close startles the crowd. Her hair is cropped close to the scalp in a severe Joan of Arc 'do, and a careful look reveals more than a few flecks of gray mixed in with the blond. She cut her hair for *Brooklyn Laundry,* a new play that premiered in L.A. last spring, in which Close portrayed a woman dying of cancer. Her physical appearance is unexpected, but even more striking is her explosive sense of humor, often expressed in a robust, hysterical cackle. She's a live wire, which is somehow not the impression one has from seeing her on-screen. Most people have an image of Glenn Close as either the angelic mother she played in *The World According to Garp, The Big Chill,* and *The Natural* or the cold-hearted bitch she embodied in *Fatal Attraction, Dangerous Liaisons,* and *Reversal of Fortune.* She can clearly play both the madonna and the whore, and Hollywood has seen fit only to shuttle her between these extremes.

Her explosive sense of humor is often expressed in a robust, hysterical cackle. She's a live wire, which is somehow not the impression one has from seeing her on-screen.

Not many of her roles have revealed that she's a vibrant, combustible woman—and a true character actress capable of an amazing range of voices and emotions. Although she's the same physical type as another blond actress, Meryl Streep, Close, forty-four, hasn't had the same opportunities to play a veritable United Nations gallery of disparate characters. That's why she jumped at the chance to appear in *Brooklyn Laundry,* Lisa-Maria Radano's first full-length play, which was directed by James L. Brooks, the Academy Award–winning director of *Terms of Endearment* and *Broadcast News,* in his theatrical debut. Costarring Woody Harrelson and Laura Dern, *Brooklyn Laundry* ran for four weeks and was *the* hot ticket in Los Angeles last spring.

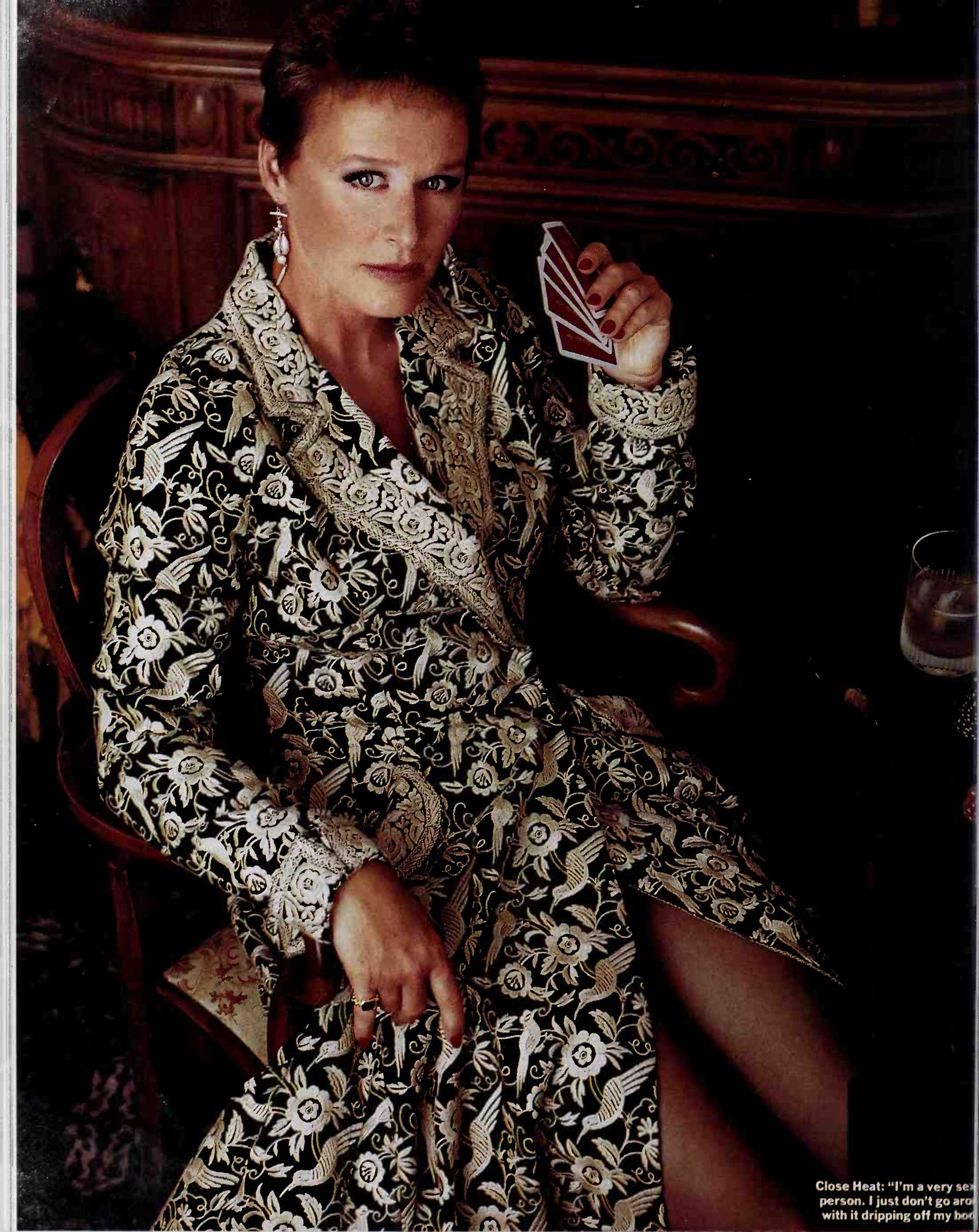
This had little to do with the quality of the play itself—a sentimental trifle peppered with some amusing lines as well as too many life-affirming clichés—but owed everything to the performers. Close in particular made it sizzle. Scalpers were getting more than a hundred dollars for the few available tickets, and the house seats went to stars like Robin Williams, Tom Hanks, and Al Pacino, as well as studio executives and agents from the Creative Artists Agency (magazine writers were allowed in only after considerable pressure was applied from back East). Although *Brooklyn Laundry,* which played at the 272-seat Coronet Theater, may not have been seen by many members of Close's public, it *was* viewed by most of the Hollywood power brokers who will determine her future in films. To those fifteen or twenty industry titans, her performance must have been a revelation. Beginning with an impeccable Brooklyn accent, Close transforms herself into a working-class cookie, erasing all our memories of Sunny von Bülow and the other patrician ladies she has portrayed. "I don't know if Glenn will ever do a more difficult part than Birdie," Jim Brooks says.

Despite the inbred audiences and the less-than-astonishing work itself, *Brooklyn Laundry* restored Close's enthusiasm for the theater. She appeared on the stage for eight years before making her movie debut, but she had been away since *Benefactors* in 1986. She has a three-year-old daughter and has been reluctant to give up their evenings together for a long stage run. The limited engagement of *Brooklyn Laundry* appealed to her, and now there is talk of mounting the play again in London early next year. Returning to the boards, even for a short run, was like coming home. "It's been a rejuvenation," Close says. "Theater really helps feed your soul in a way that movies might not, because in a movie you're under a microscope, and you don't have the audience to give you back what you give to them."

Nevertheless, Close remains attracted to both theater and films. "To put it very simply," she says, "theater is in control and movies are out of control. I used to think there was one way to do something. I don't think that way anymore, especially in movies, because you don't know what nuances a scene might have when it's cut together. You have to trust your director, because you're totally in his hands, and trust that at the moment you'll have inspiration. That's what is frightening and thrilling about film acting."

This fall audiences will see Close taking more chances in *Meeting Venus,* in which she plays a Swedish opera diva, of all things. Although she is a trained singer and rehearsed the arias from Wagner's *Tannhäuser* that are sung in the film, she had to be dubbed. "I sing, but the voice of Dame Kiri Te Kanawa comes out of my mouth," Close says. "Lucky me." The film, directed by István Szabó (whose *Mephisto* won an Academy Award for best foreign film) and produced by David Puttnam, is a comedy about the turmoil within an international opera company. Close describes the film as "very funny, in a Chekhovian way—not slapstick, but about the foibles and frailties of the human condition."

Her collaboration with a European cast and crew was both bewildering and exhilarating. "It was an extraordinary



Close Heat: "I'm a very se
person. I just don't go aro
with it dripping off my bo

experience because there was only one other American," she says. "The actors were rooted in the stage, and there were Germans, Italians, Dutch, Czechoslovakians, French, Israelis, and Hungarians. We came together in Budapest at the time when Germany was being reunited and the Persian Gulf war broke out, and there we were trying to communicate and create a work of art."

Close is the biggest name in *Meeting Venus,* but she does not have the biggest part (the main character is the orchestra conductor, played by the French actor Niels Arestrup). This is fairly typical of Close's screen outings. On one level she has had a remarkable multimedia career. She won a Tony award in 1984 starring opposite Jeremy Irons in Tom Stoppard's *The Real Thing,* and she may well win an Emmy this year for her role in the CBS television movie *Sarah Plain and Tall,* which she also coproduced. (*Sarah* was the highest-rated television program during the week it aired in February. Close accomplished what few other movie actresses have been able to do: she flattened both *Cheers* and *The Cosby Show.*) On the big screen, she has been nominated for five Academy Awards in nine years.

Yet she notes with some frustration that she has rarely been the central figure in her movies. Three of her Oscar nominations were for best supporting actress, and almost all her recent movies—*Dangerous Liaisons, Reversal of Fortune, Hamlet*—were either ensemble pieces or movies in which she played second fiddle to a man. Hollywood has been stymied by her strength.

"The last year I've basically played very supportive parts," Close says. "I haven't minded because I think in many ways my presence has helped the movie to get made. Certainly that was true of *Reversal of Fortune,* and it's also true of *Meeting Venus.* It's a script that I'm excited by, so I feel lucky to be able to help it happen.

"But I must say now *I* want to be supported. Part of the challenge of this business, if you're a woman, is to find support from the men. They're not used to giving it. I'm very philosophical about it because the whole male-female thing in our society is as undefinable as ever. We don't know what to do with each other. So why should it be easy in an industry that is basically dominated by men? It's very hard to find women heroes. Women who take control are considered unfeminine."

IF IT HAS TAKEN CLOSE A LONG TIME TO COME INTO HER own not simply as a superlative actress but as a *star,* that may be partly because of the sexism of the movie industry and partly because of Close's own love of acting, which has led her to take supporting roles for the sheer pleasure of the work. But her reticence may also have deeper roots. Close grew up in what she calls a "Yankee tradition" of puritanism, where she was discouraged from expressing herself or seizing the limelight.

Born in the aristocratic preserves of Greenwich, Connecticut, in 1947, Close had an impressive pedigree, her ancestors having settled there in the seventeenth century. When she was a young child, her father was still in medical school—he later became a prominent surgeon—and the family lived on the grounds of her grandparents' five-hundred-acre estate. Glenn, her two sisters, and one brother galloped their horses around the property, with Glenn demonstrating a fiery spirit. Her mother recalled the day when Glenn took her pony to a birthday party at a neighboring estate: "She looked so angelic in her party dress and blond hair. Then I heard her saying to one little girl, 'You touch my pony and I'll knock your head off!' "

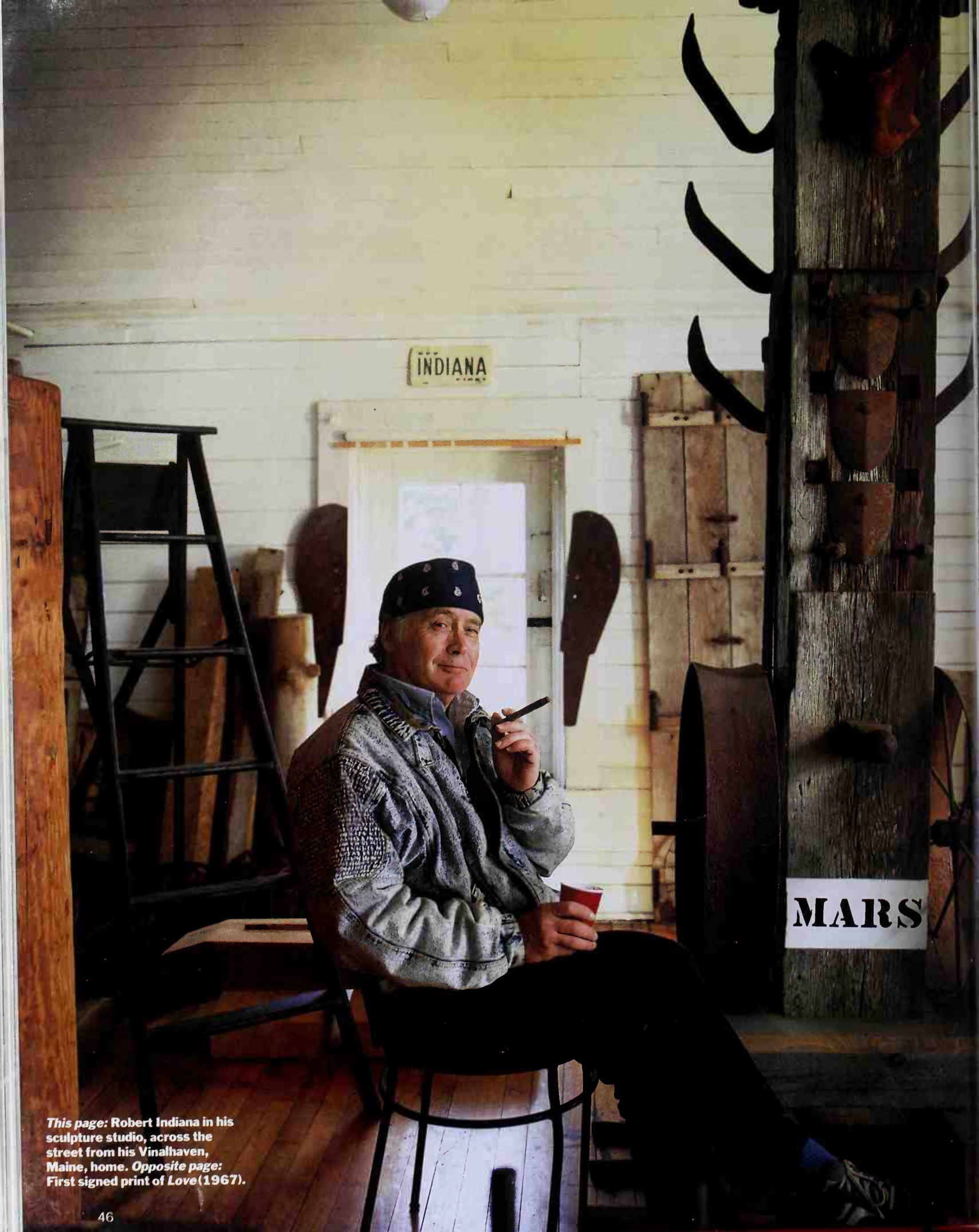
But her childhood turned into a near-gothic nightmare when her parents joined a right-wing cult called Moral Rearmament and moved to the Congo to work as missionaries. Glenn found herself shuttling back and forth between Africa and a Swiss boarding school, which she once described as "an appalling place. It had barbed wire around the drain pipes so the girls couldn't climb out at night."

Later she went to Connecticut's Rosemary Hall, the sister school to Choate, where she first discovered her aptitude for acting. Her parents most emphatically did not approve. "I wanted to act when I was quite young but my parents wouldn't hear of it," she explains. "I think they thought that going into the theater would not be good for my character." Instead, after finishing high school, Close joined the musical group Up with People, and during the days of protests against the Vietnam War, she toured military bases singing patriotic anthems. She also married the group's guitarist, Cabot Wade, but they divorced after three years.

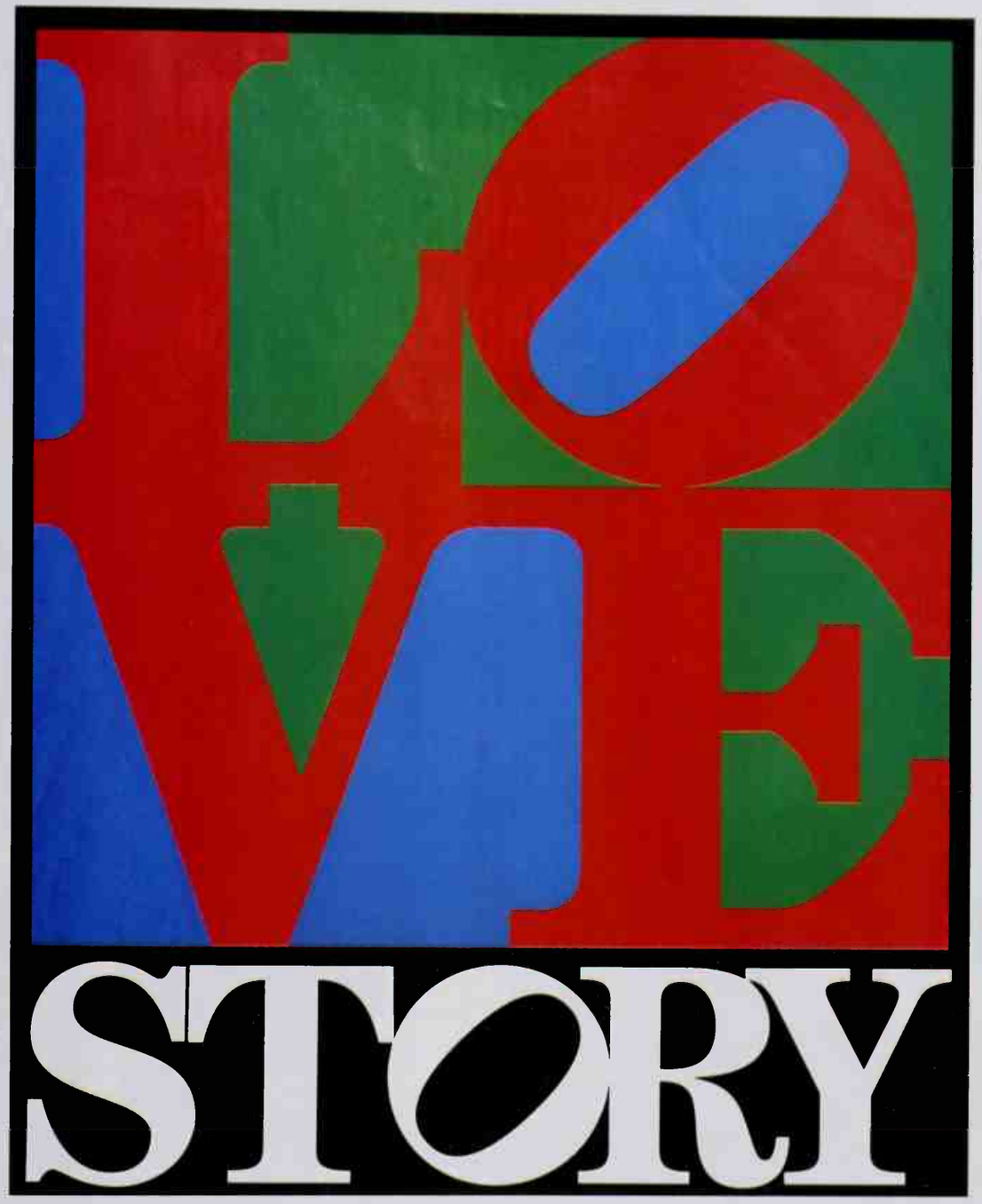
"I think my parents thought that going into the theater would not be good for my character."

Now she looks back on that interlude with acute embarrassment and obviously doesn't enjoy discussing it. "I didn't have the ability to get myself out of it until I reached a certain age," Close says quietly. "I was caught. My family had been in a group like that since I was seven years old, so I had no equipment to help myself. When you get older, you have to forgive yourself for stuff like that and forgive a lot of other people too."

When she finally dropped out of Up with People, she decided to get the college education she had missed. Close enrolled at William and Mary at age twenty-two and graduated Phi Beta Kappa. While she was in college, she at last gave herself permission to pursue the acting career that she had always craved. She claimed that she was particularly inspired by watching Dick Cavett's interviews with Katharine Hepburn. "I felt a special kinship with *(Continued on page 91)*



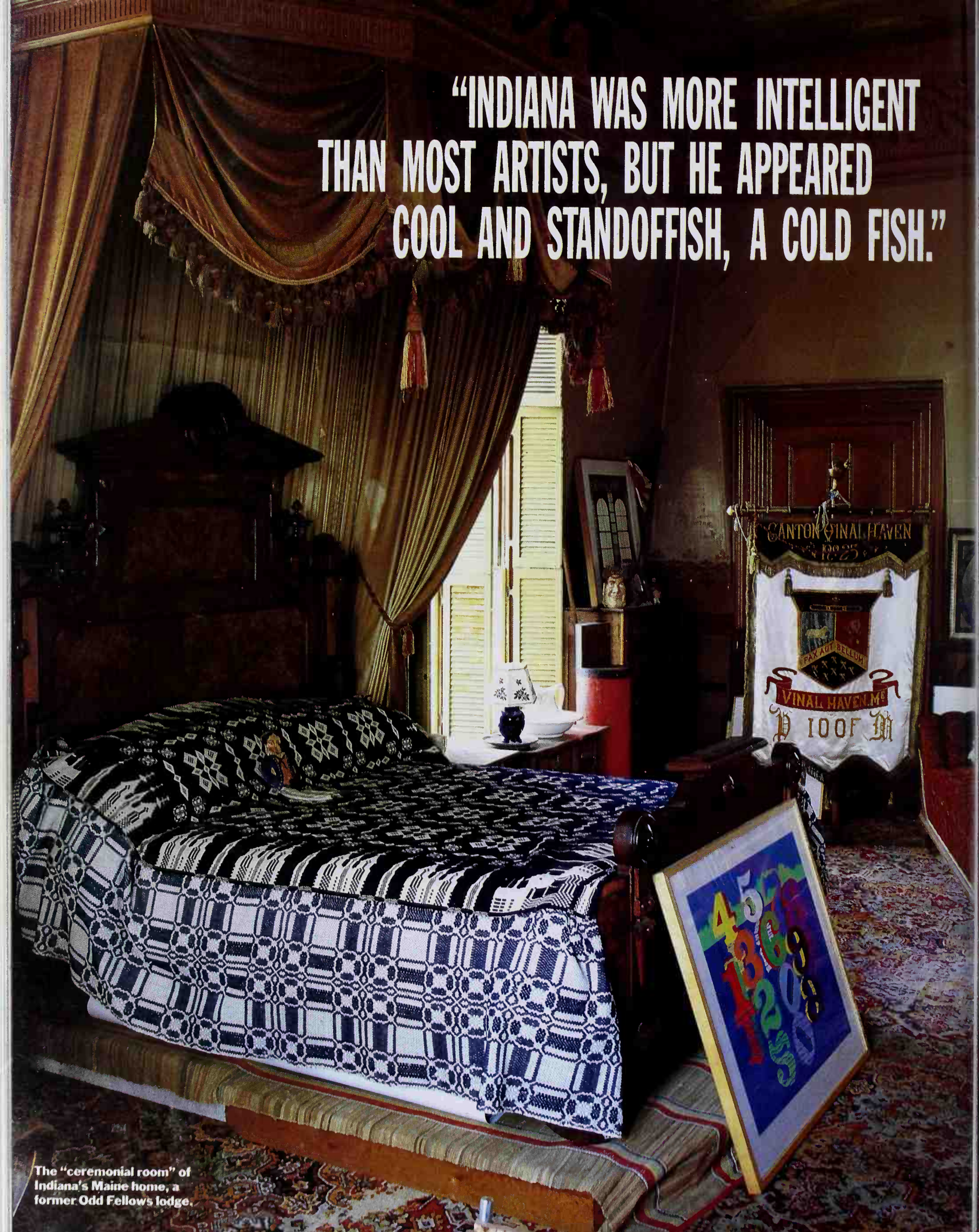
This page: **Robert Indiana in his sculpture studio, across the street from his Vinalhaven, Maine, home.** ***Opposite page:*** **First signed print of *Love* (1967).**



Pop artist Robert Indiana apotheosized the sixties when he designed his Love *sign for a Museum of Modern Art Christmas card. More than twenty years later, however, both* Love *and its creator have fallen on hard times. PAUL TAYLOR follows Indiana's career from the heights of the backbiting New York art world to the unsafe harbor of his rural Maine hideaway—where the painter's love life has suddenly become a public affair.*

PHOTOGRAPHS BY TODD EBERLE

"INDIANA WAS MORE INTELLIGENT THAN MOST ARTISTS, BUT HE APPEARED COOL AND STANDOFFISH, A COLD FISH."



The "ceremonial room" of Indiana's Maine home, a former Odd Fellows lodge.

"Love is central to my life," says Robert Indiana. "I am dedicated to the proposition, like all Christians." Indiana's paean to love—the stacked-letter design with the cat's-eye *O*—was created for a Museum of Modern Art Christmas card in 1964. For the next ten years it appeared virtually everywhere, especially after the U. S. Postal Service issued it on 330 million stamps. More than any other work of art, *Love* became the icon of the peace and love generation. As both a declaration and an exhortation, it was ubiquitous. "It's become my logo," says Indiana. "But most people have no idea who did it. My name has just disappeared."

Indeed, the famous four-letter word did not spell success for Indiana. He milked it artistically and churned out endless variations on the theme in thousands of paintings, prints, and sculptures. But his failure to copyright the design meant that he reaped few financial rewards from its wildfire proliferation: the millions of unauthorized stickers, coasters, matchbox covers, tiles, lamps, earrings, buttons, key chains, hippie patches, and wastepaper baskets. Rather than receive royalties, Indiana was royally ripped off. "The only thing it didn't come out on was toilet paper," says Indiana sourly. "And I'm rather surprised about that."

Love was bad news for Indiana in the art world too. Although the good-looking young pop artist had been a hot item in New York since 1961, the visibility of his *Love* sign and his own permutations on it year after year overwhelmed his earlier work. Quickly tiring of the logo, the artist's peers judged its creator harshly as a crushing, repetitive bore. By the time he left New York in 1978 for the seclusion of a distant island off the coast of Maine, Indiana was considered a has-been.

Yet *Love* did succeed in turning its creator into a metaphor for his times. Having created the most enduring one-word expression of the sixties, Indiana saw it become carelessly commercialized in the decade that followed. And today—in the sexual revolution's darkest hour—Indiana is suddenly finding himself a victim of the conservative backlash. Love, in other words, may have been central to Robert Indiana's life, but it was also his undoing. Now love has found him again. And again it may undo him.

ON A QUIET DAY IN AUGUST LAST YEAR, DETECTIVE Ernest W. McIntosh of Rockland, Maine, armed himself with a search warrant, boarded the Knox County Coast Guard boat, and traveled fifteen miles across Penobscot Bay to the little island of Vinalhaven. McIntosh's destination was the Victorian mansion of one Robert E. Clark, age sixty-one, known to the outside world as Robert Indiana.

Inside the artist's three-story refuge, a former Odd Fellows lodge decked out with curios and memorabilia from the life and times of Indiana and of Maine alike, McIntosh and his men conducted a search and turned up their evidence. And by nightfall, they had their prey by their side, handcuffed and aboard the Coast Guard boat on its way back to the mainland. With Indiana was a portfolio of recent prints and love-inspired drawings, nine of them explicit studies of male genitals.

On arrival in Rockland, the artist was fingerprinted, photographed, and having refused to make a statement, released on $300 bail. But the charges against him are plain and quite public: two criminal complaints of engaging a prostitute and one of patronizing the prostitution of a minor.

***American Dream #5* (1980, serigraph), a variation of Indiana's 1963 homage to Charles Demuth.**

In his request for a search warrant, Detective McIntosh stated that two men, ages nineteen and twenty-one, had told him that Robert Indiana had repeatedly paid them amounts ranging from $20 to $200 to pose nude and engage in sex during the modeling sessions. One of the men told the detective that Indiana wanted to draw his genitals and that this had led to oral sex. Moreover, such hanky-panky had allegedly been going on for years—ever since one of the men was an adolescent. One young man confessed that he "knew it was wrong but was doing it for the money." These accusations were leveled by him during the period in which he was being investigated for forging Indiana's checks.

***Left to right:* Artists Jack Youngerman, Agnes Martin, Indiana, and Ellsworth Kelly and actress Delphine Seyrig, in 1958. *Foreground:* Youngerman and Seyrig's son, Duncan.**

If convicted of the misdemeanor of engaging a prostitute, Indiana could face six months in jail and a fine of $500. If he is found guilty of patronizing the prostitution of a minor, also a misdemeanor, he could be sentenced to 364 days in jail and fined $1,000.

As an open homosexual in the tiny fishing village on Vinalhaven Island (population 1,200), Indiana stuck out like a sore thumb—ever

***AIDS* (1987), by General Idea, one of the recent appropriations of Indiana's seminal work.**

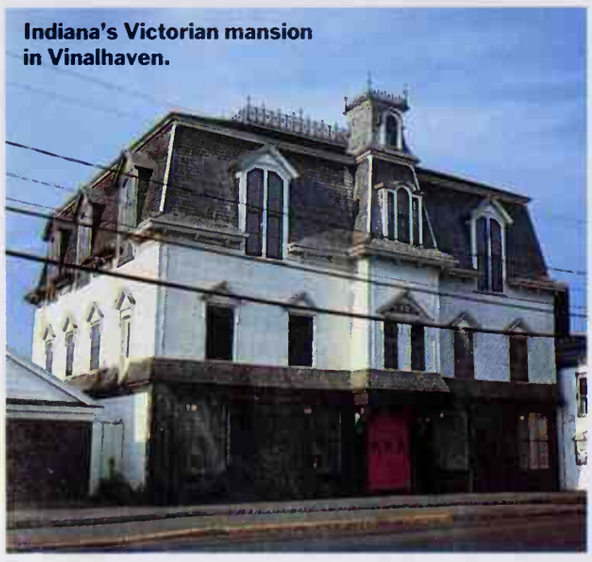
since he and his former lover staged their breakups nightly for all of the town to hear. Indiana also seems to have left himself wide open to accusations from each and every unemployed young male islander he ever paid for services rendered. In fact, his vulnerability, his relative wealth, and his artistic renown may explain why he and he alone is facing these three misdemeanors. In a reversal of the standard police practice of dragging prostitutes through the courts and giving their clients a gentlemanly slap on the wrist, the Rockland police have no intention of charging the young men with prostitution. To do so, says Knox County district attorney William Anderson, "would only make the case against Mr. Indiana harder to prosecute."

Of course, the local papers—the *Portland Press Herald* and the *Maine Times*—and even the *New York Post* ran with the story. Despite the sad reality of Indiana's victimization, who cannot savor the irony of the charges against him? Ever since the nation entered the age of AIDS, America's moralist minority has been on a witch-hunt, and the name of Robert Indiana—whether he likes it or not—is closely identified with the free-love movement. His being charged with paying for sex suggests that free love has become very expensive indeed.

As Indiana awaits trial, he is visiting New York more frequently than at any time since he left the city thirteen years ago. But in New York, too, Indiana can see how his ideal of love has deteriorated. Over the past few years, a three-man artists' collective from Canada called General Idea has produced an image based on *Love* that substitutes "AIDS" for "LOVE." As *Love* did, General Idea's revision speaks volumes about the world we live in, and whatever the group could get their hands on—magazines, wallpaper, scarves, the windows of the New Museum in New York, the sides of trams in Seattle and Amsterdam, a billboard in San Francisco, stickers, and dozens of paintings exhibited around the world—has been plastered with their tragic distortion of the face of *Love*.

In nineties neo-activist art-speak, General Idea's AA Bronson explains his group's motives: "We wanted to make AIDS a household word, something that anyone could get. And by spreading the image the way the *Love* logo was spread, we think we can deprive the disease of its exotic quality and depoliticize it. If you can get AIDS to look completely normal, you can get normal medical gears into operation that can deal with an epidemic."

Surprisingly, Indiana concurs, with a qualification. "It's what I would have done myself," he says, "because the association of love with AIDS is inevitable, one of the ironic twists of coincidence. But I wouldn't have made it as grotesque as theirs—their *D* is grotesque."



Indiana's Victorian mansion in Vinalhaven.

Cigar in hand, his head wrapped in a scarf, the Robert Indiana of the 1990s is a strange mixture of country and city. He manages to be simultaneously well-mannered and awkward, pompous and candid, intellectual and superstitious, bone-dry and sopping wet. "Indiana was always more intelligent than most artists," recalls the critic David Bourdon, "but I can't remember a time, even in the early sixties, when anyone was crazy about his personality. He appeared cool and standoffish, a cold fish." Indeed, part of Indiana's current isolation may be attributed to his arrogance. According to art-world personality Henry Geldzahler, Indiana is the only person who won't shake his hand.

If Indiana suffers from an image problem, it may have arisen from his lifelong history as an outsider, or it may be the afterglow of his former glory. Even his all-American stage name, Indiana, has a dated, hippie-ish ring to it. Fortunately, however, things have a way of reversing themselves, and Robert Indiana is beginning to receive the recognition due one of the key artists of the pop era. Paintings and prints from his latest series, using the work of Marsden Hartley (who died in 1943 and was Maine's greatest modernist painter) as a focus, are being bought by museums around the country. Last year, Abrams published a 232-page monograph on Indiana. In December, there were three simultaneous exhibitions in New York—at the Marisa del Re and the Ruth Siegel galleries on Fifty-seventh Street and at the Vinalhaven Press Gallery in SoHo. And in May, he held a print retrospective at Susan Sheehan Gallery in New York City, which was accompanied by a glossy catalogue raisonné of his prints from 1951 to the present and two versions of a new color etching, *Love 1991*.

Indiana's works are also making an appearance on the resale market, where they are fetching respectable prices. Two years ago, a *Love* painting went for almost $145,000 at auction in France, and now, *One Indiana Square* (commissioned in 1970 by the Indiana National Bank in Indianapolis for $10,000) is on the market for a mid-six-figure amount. Indiana is optimistic about his chances for a comeback despite the crash in the art market and the blip in his personal fortunes. He is also advisedly modest. "I'm not a million-dollar auction figure—let's put it that way," he says.

BEFORE HE ASSUMED THE MONIKER OF HIS HOME STATE IN the 1950s and set about becoming a successful artist, Robert Clark was a rootless Depression-era only child born to Christian Scientist parents. At church, he says, he used to contemplate the God Is Love sign that hung on the pulpit.

IN MANY WAYS, INDIANA'S WORKS PROVIDE

Another part of the "ceremonial room," which contains some of Indiana's most famous work: the paper maquette for his *Love* sculpture (1966); *Hallelujah* (1969, acrylic on linen); and a print from *The Hartley Elegies* series (1990).

During the first twenty-one years of his life, Indiana lived in seventeen homes, shuttling across the state of Indiana from parent to bankrupted parent. After his ex-aunt murdered his grandmother, Indiana took shelter with his mortician uncle, moved here and there to study art, ran off to join the air force, which at least enabled him to study art under the G.I. Bill, and later traveled to Europe on a fellowship. Through it all, the young Robert Clark exhibited extraordinary stamina and a peculiar vision. By the time he moved to New York in 1954, he had educated and groomed himself to become an all-American poet and painter and an advocate of brotherly love.

In 1954, Indiana wrote, typeset, and published a poem whose first line was simply "Love." His early heroes were the great American writers Herman Melville, Walt Whitman, and Hart Crane and visual artists Charles Demuth and Marsden Hartley (whose paintings he admired for their adventurous use of letters and numbers). In the 1960s, Indiana lifted lines from the novels and poems of Melville and Crane that eulogized New York and painted them reverently into his pop portraits of the city. Whitman's words, which also appeared in early canvases, especially stirred the young artist. *I Hear America Singing*—with its romantic evocation of good-hearted American people from different walks of life singing their "varied carols" and "strong melo- *(Continued on page 94)*

CLEAREST EXAMPLES OF THE POP AESTHETIC.

THE NONCONFORMIST

Italy's famed novelist Alberto Moravia spent a lifetime bucking convention. But his final years with the headstrong Carmen tested even the liberal reflexes of the notorious voyeur. The unrepentant widow and libertine gives ALAIN ELKANN an exclusive look at her life as the oracle's muse.

ALMOST ONE YEAR AGO, ON SEPTEMBER 26, 1990, Alberto Moravia, Italy's most famous novelist, was found dead at the age of eighty-two in his Rome apartment on Lungotevere Vittoria, a street near the Tiber. The body was discovered by Mario Andreose, the editorial director of Moravia's publisher, Bompiani, who had come to Rome to bring the author the first copy of what would be his last book, *Vita di Moravia,* the story of his life, which was a result of a long series of interviews I had conducted with him. (The English-language version, *The Life of Moravia,* is due next year from Arcade.) Moravia died at about 8:30 A.M. A lifelong early riser, he'd made it through part of his morning routine—showering and shaving—before suffering a heart attack.

In the efficient way in which people often respond to the shock of death, Andreose summoned a cadre of the author's intimates to the apartment: the writer Dacia Maraini (often referred to as Alberto's second wife, although they were never formally married), Moravia's sister Elena Cimino, who lives in Rome, former Italian prime minister Giovanni Spadolini, and the novelist Enzo Siciliano. Completing the routine Moravia had begun, they dressed him. Carefully they chose one of his favorite shirts—red with white stripes—and a knitted pink silk tie, one the author had often worn. (It was a gift I'd purchased for him at the Harvard Coop. Moravia once lost it while traveling in Yemen, but it was miraculously recovered at his hotel and mailed back to him.)

Over the course of the day, more admirers collected in the apartment—luminaries like Lina Wertmüller and husband Enrico Job, the Italian actress Laura Betti, and Bernardo Bertolucci. The last had directed the film version of *The Conformist,* Moravia's 1952 novel about how a man's misguided search for acceptance leads to his participation in an assassination. At least a half dozen other Moravia novels triumphed on the big screen, including *Two Women,* for which Sophia Loren garnered an Oscar. Eventually somebody sent word of his death to the media, whose tributes mentioned Moravia's fifty-some books, including *The Woman of Rome, Two Adolescents,* and *The Fancy Dress Party.* They celebrated a career that began while the author was in his teens. His 1929 debut novel, *The Time of Indifference,* arrived a decade before works in the existential genre by Sartre and Camus did. One Communist party newspaper, *L'Unità,* announced his death with a cataclysmic boom that was noisy even by headline standards: THERE GOES THE 20TH CENTURY.

Moravia died alone, as if to keep from disturbing his wife, the writer Carmen Llera Moravia. She was in

Alberto Moravia eyes a radiant Carmen during a rare social excursion in 1989.

Moravia died alone,

Morocco at the time, working on a magazine story, and learned of her widowhood on the radio while driving a Jeep through the desert. The image of Carmen motoring through the shiny sands while her husband, forty-six years her senior, stayed behind in failing health gave the sanguine young writer's detractors plenty of smirking room. It wasn't the first time. The Italian tabloids had already had a field day with a less than discreet affair between Carmen and the Lebanese Druse leader Walid Jumblatt.

Now a hungry public, bereft of a favorite novelist, watched for signs of contrition amid Carmen's grief as she returned to Rome. Moravia's lovingly clad body had been transported to the Capitoline, Rome's city hall, to lie in state, an honor rarely extended to members of the artistic community. Ironically Alberto and Carmen had been married at the Capitoline just four years before. The early morning civil ceremony had lasted only minutes and escaped most Romans' attention—except for the droves who make their living with a camera.

Once again the eager paparazzi greeted Carmen at the Capitoline. She'd arrived from Morocco the first evening Alberto lay in state; a car met her on the airport tarmac. She was dressed in beige and carried orange flowers she'd brought back from Africa. With great drama, Carmen entered the Capitoline, her signature sunglasses offering some protection against the flashbulb lightning. She went straight to the coffin and stood beside her husband's corpse. She touched his thick eyebrows, white as snowflakes, then held his big, gnarled hands, stroking them as if their owner were still alive. It seemed in some way a form of communication, part of the mysterious shorthand that led both friend and foe to wonder what had sustained the aging oracle and his ethereal muse. Yet to understand the loose configuration that was Moravia's relationship with his stunning Spanish wife is to chance upon something essential about the man himself.

WHAT YOU NOTICE FIRST ABOUT THE THIRTY-SEVEN-year-old Carmen is her lips, set, as one friend puts it, in a "nonstop pout." Her willowy figure, testament to her obsession with exercise, sometimes makes her appear taller than her roughly five feet six inches. Her large, brown eyes—when not hidden by sunglasses—pick up the hues of her long, straight hair. Naturally dark brown, it has been lightened to a caramel shade. Carmen's hands appear large, but only to the close observer. Her teeth receive many brushings daily with Crest—the only brand of toothpaste Carmen will use. (She stocks up on it while in the U.S.) Worn as if it were a uniform, Carmen's wardrobe consists largely of shorts, flats, opaque stockings, and outsize jackets. She loathes jewelry but will wear the pair of gold earrings Alberto bought for her on a trip they took to Yemen. Twice a year she goes to Giorgio Armani to pick out her clothes for the season. When she's finished with these expensive suitings, she gives them to her friends or to the maid.

Carmen's girlish gait appears to have barely changed since her childhood in Tudela, Spain, not far from Pamplona, the Pyrenees, and France. Like Pamplona, Tudela is known for its bullfights, and Carmen took to the excitement generated by the toreadors during festivals. Her father was a landowner, a Franco supporter, and mayor of a city near his estates in northern Navarre; her mother, a handsome, melancholic woman. Carmen has a sister and two older brothers who had already taken their university degrees and married before she went off to boarding school.

"I was taciturn and very bright in school," she says. "I was very tidy and had simple tastes." In rattling off a list of the authors whose works she read as a young woman—including Colette, Proust, Dos Passos, Hemingway—she plaintively includes the name Moravia somewhere in the middle. "I listened to lots of music—Donovan, Leonard Cohen, Bob Dylan. I loathed the Beatles. I spoke French well—my first boyfriend was French. I went to the sea at San Sebastián, but I hated the Atlantic, that icy water. Finally, when I was an adolescent, I went with my brother to the Costa Brava and got to know the Mediterranean, which from that moment on became very important in my life."

Her childlike aura extends to the way she flits from topic to topic. Chatter about the Mediterranean abruptly turns to her sister in New York. "I often go there to see her. Though I love

s if to keep from disturbing his wife.

New York, I could never stay in America for more than a month at a time. I need to be on this side of the Atlantic: my center is Europe. . . . The countries I like best are Italy, Spain, Morocco, Egypt, Syria. My cities? Jerusalem, Cairo, Marrakesh, Damascus. And the place I consider home, the place I always have to come back to: Rome."

As she speaks, Carmen stretches out on the fur blanket that covers the bed in her room, a Spartan space in the rambling penthouse she shared with Alberto in Rome's quiet, middle-class Prati district. Bookcases line nearly every wall of the simply furnished home that some say has a monastic quality to it. The airy apartment commands restful views of the Tiber River. Light is in ample supply, thanks to a wraparound terrace. Despite Moravia's ambitious globe-trotting, his apartment is no showcase for souvenirs. ("He wasn't sentimental," asserts a friend.) Yet an occasional African mask, a nod to the continent Moravia venerated, is displayed here and there. A few works by his sister Adriana, a painter who lives in Florence, hang on the walls. Almost nothing in the place has been changed since Moravia's death, including his study, where he worked on a manual typewriter and liked to nap on a nearby sofa. It's as if Alberto is yet again traveling. So the author's study, his dressing room, and his bedroom—Alberto and Carmen each had their own—remain untouched. The maid has been instructed to keep those areas clean and orderly. Only a Giorgio Morandi drawing and a Carlo Levi portrait of Moravia have been moved from Alberto's room to the wall above Carmen's bed.

The remaining walls in Carmen's bedroom are hidden by shelves containing books in Italian, Spanish, English, and French. There is also a desk made by a German friend and an exercise bike Carmen rides each morning. Her husband's death brought about no changes in her routine; for example, she'd always slept alone and continues to do so. "I hate to sleep with someone. In the morning, if I've slept with someone, I feel unclean."

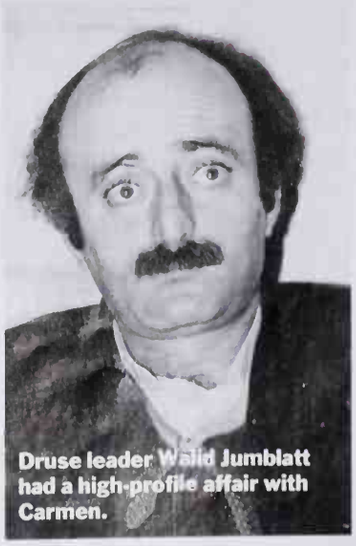
Her penchant for rising early doesn't always suit overnight guests. After a half hour on the exercise bike and a light breakfast, she goes on foot to her studio in the Parioli quarter. "As soon as I arrive, I sit down at the typewriter, a portable manual, because I want my thoughts to have the same pace as my fingers." She recently began work on her fourth novel—the plot is still under wraps—and writes for several Italian, German, and French magazines. Many of them have pressed Carmen to write about her relationship with Alberto, but she has steadfastly refused. She even turned down a close friend at an Italian publication. Only now has she agreed to an interview for this story—presumably because she was aware of Alberto's trust in me.

ALBERTO MORAVIA ALWAYS WANTED THE women in his life—or at least the ones with whom he set up housekeeping—to be writers. His first wife, celebrated Italian novelist Elsa Morante, won literary prizes for both *House of Liars* (1948) and *Arturo's Island* (1957). Friends say the couple's fights were also prizewinning material. One described them as "epic," erupting in social settings with little regard for hapless guests or spectators. Perhaps because of age, or because later lovers could not match Morante's critical acclaim, Moravia appeared to lose some of his zest for showy verbal sparring.

Even though Alberto remained wed to Elsa until her death in 1985, he took up with Dacia Maraini in the 1960s. Then a budding fiction writer, she has gone on to find her voice in journalism. It was with Dacia—in her twenties when the fiftyish Moravia met her—that the novelist most earnestly indulged his passion for travel. (He particularly delighted in Africa and numbered Russia and China among his more exotic destinations.) She became increasingly involved in Italy's politically potent feminist movement of the 1970s—writing and speaking out on women's rights—and her stridency is said to have affected her relationship with Alberto; when they broke up, Dacia had long since moved out of Alberto's apartment.

Despite the relationship's dissolution, Dacia was left half of Moravia's estate—believed to be worth several million dollars. The other half went to Carmen, who claims to be as unfazed about splitting the holdings as she is about money matters in general. "I loathe property," she has often been heard to say. "I would rather not keep anything. Once I bought a car, but I sold it a few days later." She routinely signs documents submitted by Moravia's lawyer without reading them.

Carmen remains in the sparsely decorated Rome apartment she shared with Moravia for almost a decade.



Druse leader Walid Jumblatt had a high-profile affair with Carmen.

THE PATH THAT LED CARMEN FROM READING Moravia to moving in with him could inspire a cinematic crowd pleaser. She separated from her first husband in 1974, when she was about twenty, and moved back in with her parents. Though they were good, bourgeois Catholics and divorce was then rare in Spain, they

welcomed her home along with her young son, Hector. Carmen was able to complete her studies and take her degree at the University of Zaragoza. During those years, she visited Italy, which made such a deep impression on her that she determined to move there. It didn't take her long to land a position teaching Spanish literature in Palermo. The friends Carmen made there directed her north to Rome, where she became a student of the Sicilian writer and professor Carmelo Samonà. Her occasional freelance writing led to an assignment from a Sicilian newspaper to conduct an interview with Alberto Moravia.

At the time, the writer was in his early seventies and feeling morose over the end of his long relationship with Dacia Maraini. After their first meeting, Alberto and Carmen were not to part. Phone calls led to evenings at the movies, which begat weekends away at his beach house in the resort town of Sabaudia on the Tyrrhenian Sea about fifty miles south of Rome. Eventually Carmen took up permanent residence with the celebrated author, a move that assured the fledgling scribe some celebrity of her own. Today many are the Roman gossip sessions in which the name "Carmen" needs no cognomen.

The author's new live-in companion would not become Signora Moravia for another five years, until 1986. Paradoxically, at least in the case of Elsa Morante, Alberto maintained the highest respect for the institution of marriage. As much as he wanted to marry Carmen—and Dacia before her—he would not divorce his first wife, Elsa. Her death alone freed him to take a legal wife once more.

Carmen may be the second Mrs. Moravia, but there is one distinction she shares with no one. She is the only person to whom Moravia ever dedicated a book—a collection of stories titled *Erotic Tales*. He wrote it while confined to bed, having broken his leg in an automobile accident shortly after they met. The twenty short stories—which Alberto at first wanted to call *Anatomic Tales*—bring to mind an observation the author once made about his fairly mechanical worldview: "I have at heart, above all, the human person . . . with his name, occupation, age, face, body, arms, legs."

Moravia had long since achieved the sort of renown that brings instant recognition. In Rome and Paris, especially, people would stop him on the street, address him as maestro or *maître*, and ask for his autograph. He endeared himself to a mass audience from the earliest days of his career by bucking Fascist dictates and writing unflinchingly about sex and political corruption. Countrymen gladly hid him when, because he was of Jewish ancestry, he was listed as a subversive during the German occupation of Rome in 1943.

The thirty-two-year-old Carmen and Alberto, seventy-eight, wed in 1986 at Rome's Capitoline, where the venerated author would lie in state four years later.

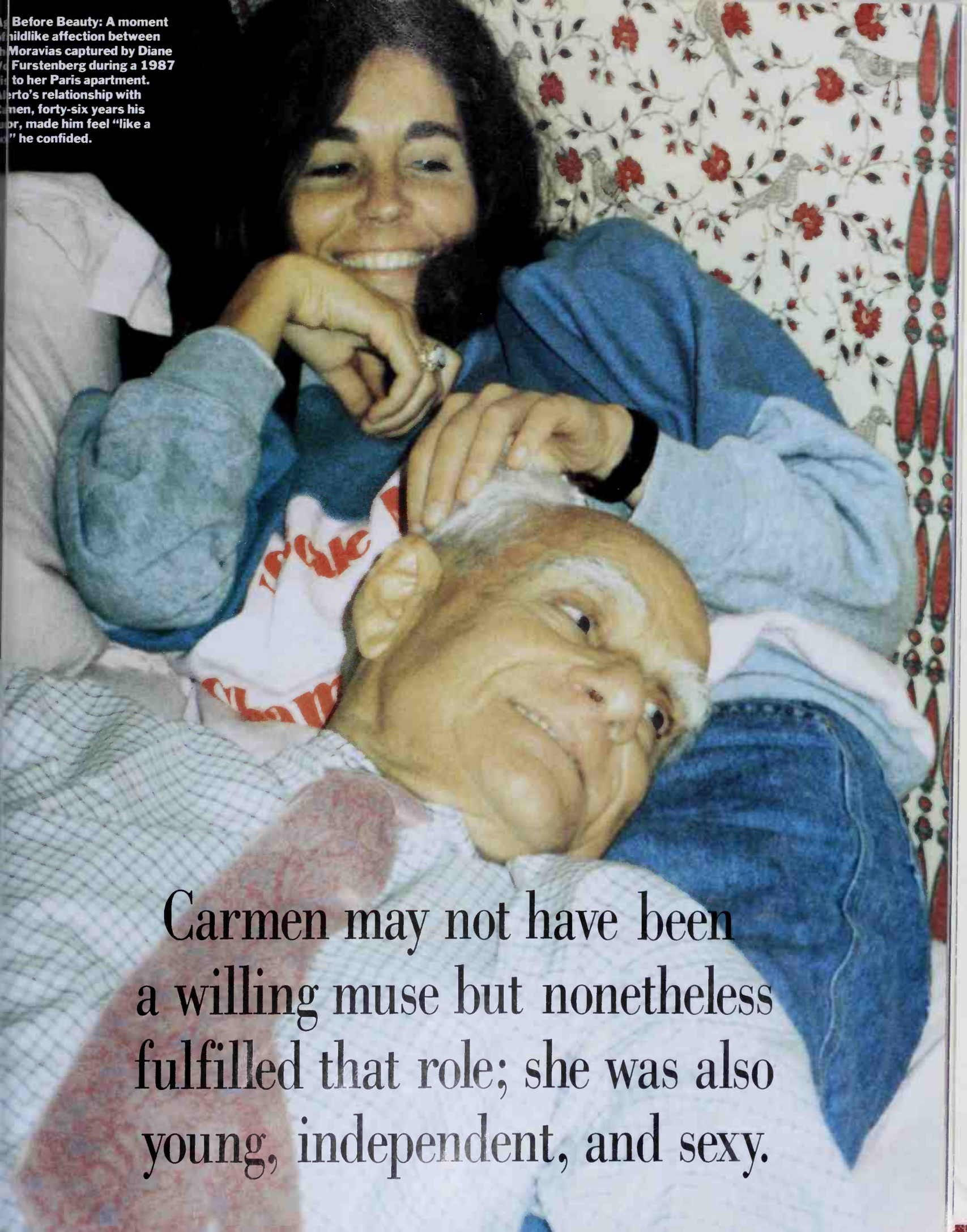
For decades, the prestige his work brought to Italy was a point of national pride. In the early eighties, voters elected Moravia to the European Parliament, and he frequently attended its sessions in Strasbourg; nuclear disarmament became his personal crusade. On the other side of the Atlantic, *Time* magazine had declared him "one of the best writers in the world today." Part of his popularity stemmed from his ability to live in the moment. He was in the vanguard of every avant-garde movement: existentialism, surrealism, neorealism. And, thanks in part to his love for Carmen, his creativity surged even to the end.

Carmen had yet to establish herself as a writer when she met Alberto, but she had all the other requisite attributes: she was young, energetic, independent, and sexy. And something about her promised she would deliver the master's codependent elixirs: love and trouble. If the combination seems at odds with itself, it nonetheless formed the underpinnings of one Moravia best-seller after another. In a telling passage from *Conjugal Love*, the character Silvio pronounces: "I have said that loving means loving everything about the beloved person, the defects . . . just as much as the beauties. These grimaces, these distortions, although extremely ugly, were soon just as dear to me as the beauty, the harmony, the serenity of the better moments."

One of Moravia's more regrettable moments came in 1986, after Carmen met the Lebanese Druse leader Walid Jumblatt while in Stockholm for the funeral of Sweden's slain president, Olof Palme. Their ensuing affair kept the hungry Italian press well fed. Photos of the odd couple cavorting about Rome were generously splashed across tabloid pages. Carmen was invited to the spiritual leader's castle in Moukhtara, Lebanon, to meet his wife, Nora. Affairs may have been within the bounds of the Moravias' "open" relationship, but some of Alberto's intimates contend he had trysts of a lower profile in mind. Still, the intensely private Moravia was all stoic indifference on the surface. Yet something bittersweet burbled within. As one friend puts it, "He took it gallantly, but inside he was saddened by the publicity." Little more than a year later Carmen appeared to have had her fill of the hubbub as well, dismissing Jumblatt as "rather ridiculous and infantile."

But Alberto was to feel the sting of his wife's flagrant affair once more. When Carmen wrote her first novel in 1988 as a gift to Moravia—and as a bet with herself—it came wrapped in unsavory memories. *Georgette* is the thinly veiled story of her rompings with Jumblatt. One passage finds Georgette and her "Bey" dashing off to a hotel room where the fictional seductress "loses her sense because of his protracted delay." The reviews were respectable, and sales, driven in large part by curiosity, were brisk. Although Alberto had encouraged Carmen to publish the book and reveled with her in its success, the tale itself is said to have brought him great pain. Characteristically his hurt was well contained. When asked about Carmen's book, he valiantly offered, "She tells a story quite well."

For his part, Alberto, an unusually vigorous septuagenarian, continued to see old and new *(Continued on page 98)*



Before Beauty: A moment ildlike affection between Moravias captured by Diane Furstenberg during a 1987 to her Paris apartment. rto's relationship with men, forty-six years his or, made him feel "like a " he confided.

Carmen may not have been a willing muse but nonetheless fulfilled that role; she was also young, independent, and sexy.

vault gestalt

Sales of safes, vaults, and security devices are skyrocketing. DOUG STEWART offers a complete guide to "secure storage" at home, where one thing is clear: the little wall safe behind the painting has seen its day.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY TORKIL GUDNASON

Safe Investment: A growing number of vaults are designed for private dwellings.

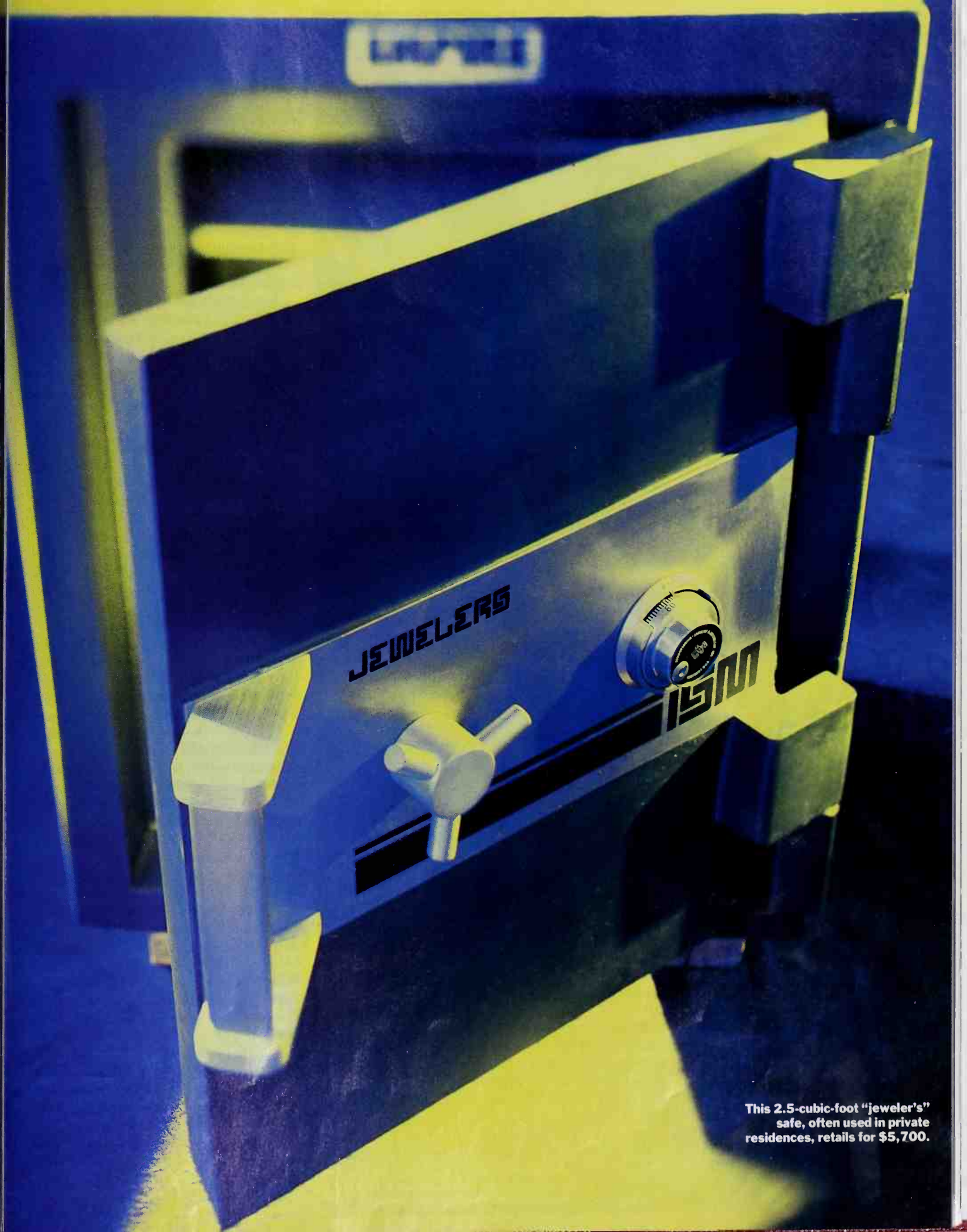
SOMEWHERE ON BOSTON'S SOUTH Shore, there is a verdant backyard with a secret. Beneath it is a $25,000 walk-in vault, an art collection worth more than the owner will reveal, and an underground house-to-vault passageway. Only two people know the vault's precise location: the owner and his excavator. Even the people at Boston Lock and Safe weren't told—and they sold him the thing.

Some people might consider an underground vault adequate security in itself, but this cautious collector is taking no chances. There is always a risk, he reasons, that a burglar will drive onto his lawn late some night with a pile driver in tow. Welcome to the age of (possibly justified) paranoia.

Private art collectors are notoriously tight-lipped about their security arrangements, but it's safe to say that even those with modest collections have begun educating themselves about the exotica of safes, vaults, locks, and alarms. According to one industry reference, the *Hallcrest Report,* sales of secure-storage equipment have been growing a healthy 15 percent annually for the past decade. Americans spent $420 million on these products last year and are expected to lay out $731 million per year by the turn of the century.

Several much-publicized art thefts heightened the interest in safes and vaults, but so did the dramatic price increases for art and other collectibles during the 1980s boom. Even the S&L scandal has had its impact. When the savings and loans disappeared, so did their safe-deposit boxes, and prices of the remaining boxes have been rising steadily.

Another reason for all this circumspection is the soaring price of insurance. The cost of insuring $50,000 worth of jewelry, for instance, can add up over a mere four years to about one-tenth of its total value. The same outlay could pay for a large, high-quality,



This 2.5-cubic-foot "jeweler's" safe, often used in private residences, retails for $5,700.

Many older-style money safes have round doors.

burglar-resistant safe instead.

But as the past year's sales have shown, another factor has come into play. "In the last twelve months, the security market has just been going through the roof," says Scott Reed, vice president of the Illinois-based trade monthly *Locksmith Ledger International*. This confirms an old locksmith's adage about the economy, which Reed quotes: "In bad times, three industries always do well—liquor, entertainment, and security. People want to get drunk, go to the movies, and lock up what they have left."

For many who hope to do that locking up at home, the traditional little wall safe behind the painting in the library is no longer enough. Industrial-strength vaults may be designed primarily for the corporate or commercial customer (the payroll office or the diamond merchant), but the purchasers also include a fair number of prosperous, security-conscious homeowners.

What people put inside these compartments, whatever size they may be, is sometimes itself a carefully guarded secret. "We just shipped a standard bank-type vault door to an individual in Montana," says Dean More, a vice president of Hamilton Safe, in Fairfield, Ohio, one of the industry's most prestigious manufacturers. "He calls it a wine cellar, but you and I both know he's got gold in there."

Some such claims may be genuine, even if they are cases of security overkill, as the vault makers are more than willing to concede. More also recalls a widow in Tulsa years ago who explained that she wanted a bank-vault door for her wine cellar. "It turned out she really *was* buying it for her wine cellar," he says, a bit shocked. He found the request "peculiar," but he wasn't about to discourage the sale.

"It would amaze you how many bottles of wine and liquor are kept in vaults," says Harry J. Stoia, president of Boston Lock and Safe, which bills itself as the oldest locksmith in the country (established in 1790). "You don't want a fifteen-hundred-dollar bottle of wine lying on an open shelf where someone can walk by and break it." Nor would you want a bottle of 1961 Château Pétrus or Haut-Brion exposed to the light and temperature changes in your dining room.

Boston Lock has sold safes and vaults to collectors of stamps and coins, antique guns, rare manuscripts and autographs, and porcelain figurines (for which the safe was lined with carpeting and foam-rubber padding). And a growing number of safes and vaults are bought by art collectors for paintings, drawings, watercolors, lithographs, and sculptures.

To some observers, that seems illogical. Theoretically, people acquire art because they want to display it. But perhaps you're an obsessive collector with more artwork than wall space and you find yourself obliged to rotate the collection the way museums do. Or you plan to entrust your house to a reckless, chain-smoking nephew while you summer in Provence.

Faced with these and other, more mundane situations, you may find it advisable to store some of your artwork, at least temporarily. The trick, for you and for collectors everywhere,

SAFETY IN NUMBERS: WHAT THE RATINGS MEAN

A good fire-resistant safe tends not to be a good burglar-resistant safe, and vice versa, so Underwriter's Laboratories (UL) offers separate fire and burglary ratings for safes and vaults. United States safe and vault manufacturers aren't required by law to submit their products for UL scrutiny, but most do, because of the credibility and consumer confidence the ratings inspire.

The fire ratings are based on a gruesome battery of tests during which UL technicians may flame-broil a safe for several hours and drop it from thirty-three feet to see if it cracks open. This is done because after a major fire an upstairs safe can easily wind up in the basement.

At the low end of the scale, a safe that earns a 350–1 rating has kept its contents below 350 degrees Fahrenheit while being engulfed in flames for one hour.

At the high end, the inside of a safe rated 125–4 remains below 125 degrees after four hours.

The cheapest fire safes are the size of a small microwave oven and are available for about $150. A top-rated fire safe generally costs more than $2,000 and can go as high as $10,000 for a twenty-cubic-foot model.

Burglar-resistant safes are not only heavier but also use more expensive materials and sport fancier locks. The walls of a state-of-the-art, theft-resistant safe may be a five-inch-thick sandwich of steel, copper, aluminum, chromium, ceramic, and reinforced concrete.

In their burglary tests, UL's master abusers bash the safe's dials with crowbars, attack its doors with acetylene torches, and pound its sides with sledgehammers.

The burglary ratings refer to both the equipment a safe resists and to the length of time the safe can withstand the attack.

A TL-15 safe, for example, has kept a UL expert with hand tools at bay for fifteen minutes. A real-life burglary attempt will probably take several times as long, because the crooks also need time to break into the dwelling and prepare their tools.

A safe rated TRTL-60, on the other hand, has withstood a more sophisticated assault with both torches and tools for a full hour.

Also look for the notation "× 6" following the UL code. This means that the rating applies to all six of the safe's sides, which is essential (unless you plan to lower the entire thing into a pool of hardening cement).

A small, cabinet-size TL-15 safe costs roughly $1,000; a doorway-size version can cost seven times as much. Safes and vaults rated higher than TL-15 cost $5,000 to $30,000 or more, depending on size and features.

UL's freewheeling testers also burn and pound their way into full-size bank vaults, rating the vaults' resistance on a separate four-point scale: M (which stands for mercantile), 1, 2, and 3. These resist continuous attack for fifteen minutes, thirty minutes, one hour, and two hours, respectively.

TIPS FROM THE PROS

- *Don't assume that a heavy safe is a strong one. Judge a safe by its UL ratings for fire and burglary, not by its looks.*
- *Have your dealer, not your local mover, arrange for delivery. Safes and vaults are surprisingly vulnerable during a move—dials can pop off and doors can swing off their hinges or lock into place permanently.*
- *Don't use a birthday or social security number for your combination. Those are the first numbers your disgruntled son-in-law will try.*
- *Change your combination once a year. You never know who's been watching.*
- *Don't hide your combination on the floor behind the safe. That's the second thing your son-in-law will think of.*
- *Replace a fire safe after twenty-five years or after it has been engulfed by a fire. The key to a safe's insulating properties is the moisture in its walls. Once the insulation dries out, the safe is worthless.*

For $14,100, an art collector can own this 24.7-cubic-foot "supertreasury" vault, about the size of a standard refrigerator.

is finding the best kind of secure storage for your needs.

The decision, naturally, is best made after at least a stab at consumer self-education. To begin with, some of the basic product terminology in this field is rendered almost meaningless in actual use. Until recently experts insisted that a safe protected against fire and a vault protected against break-ins, but now the terms are used interchangeably. Dictionary definitions refer to a "safe" as a place or receptacle and to a "vault" as a room or compartment. When a big freestanding safe is called a "portable vault," the idea is to imply added importance or protection.

Prospective buyers should recognize up front that there are no guarantees. "Nothing is burglarproof, nothing is fireproof, nothing is bulletproof," says Bob Rosberg, director of the Mosler Anti-Crime Bureau, a division of Mosler, Inc., the Hamilton, Ohio, company that has manufactured Mosler safes for 124 years. "When you buy a safe, all you're really buying is time." Time, that is, for police or fire fighters to arrive after the appropriate alarm has been triggered.

Misconceptions abound, especially about fire safes. "People will buy a safe with fire protection in mind," adds Rosberg. "But a burglar could probably get into it with a large screwdriver." Nine-tenths of the walls' thickness may simply be fire insulation, he points out.

Ordinary safes and vaults in this country are usually built to protect against thieves or fires, but not both (see "Safety in Numbers: What the Ratings Mean," p. 61). *(Continued on page 100)*

VAULT FINDING: THE COMMERCIAL-STORAGE OPTION

For those who are not multimillionaires, the cost of buying and installing a vault of one's own for storing art is apt to be sobering. And even if the price of a TRTL-60 × 6 doesn't make you blink, you may not relish the idea of a massive, gray steel safe taking up space in your otherwise tasteful home.

One alternative is to stash your artwork at the bank. Unfortunately, the largest bank safe-deposit boxes are typically no larger than a drawer two feet square and thirteen inches high. For people with manageably small objects to stow, that's dandy. But most crated paintings take up more room than that, and large ones require a great deal more.

Even if your fancy leans toward the tiny sizes, safe-deposit boxes are in short supply. At one typical bank on New York's Upper East Side, the wait for jumbo boxes (at $1,600 annually) stretches for six months.

For the art collector, commercial high-security storage vaults are a more suitable option. At New York's Univault on East Fifty-seventh Street, for instance, customers include banks that hold paintings in escrow, as well as private collectors who have a painting or two to sell and would rather have showings at a place of business than in the sanctity of their home. Some people store single paintings for what Univault's Michael Butcher calls a "nominal fee" of fifty dollars a month.

The National Association of Security and Data Vaults president, Bill Gilchrist, manages the association's flagship facility, Intervault, in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Within its massive thirty-five- by twenty-four-foot strong room at the moment are a small Monet, a large Raphael, and a Degas, along with an assortment of antique guns, computer tapes, and stamp collections. A collection of Dalís appraised at $11.5 million spent time inside, as did Hank Aaron's record-breaking bat.

"We had an early Picasso stored here, but the four investors who bought it didn't trust each other," Gilchrist recalls. "One would take me aside and say, 'Don't let him in unless I'm here too.' We finally kicked them out, along with their painting."

Many of Gilchrist's clients are members of Florida's Gold Coast social circuit, who keep jewelry in small safe-deposit boxes inside and "stop by early in the evening, put on their jewelry, go to the party or ball, then stop off on the way home and put their jewelry back."

Intervault rentals range from $60 a year for a rolling-pin-size box to $200 a month for a locked private cabinet. New York's Univault rents closet-size lockers from $250 a month and, for large collections, a gated, bulk-storage area within the vault at $1,400 a month.

Since a short-lived boom in the mid-1980s, the vault-storage business has fallen off, a victim of overexpansion, leaving fewer companies from which to choose. The National Association of Security and Data Vaults (305-565-7466) provides a list of members in thirty-one states.

Parrying a Torch: Using blowtorches and tools, burglars attacked this Empire ISM TRTL-30 × 6 safe (list price $12,735) at a leading Philadelphia jeweler's in 1987. They didn't get in.

up: This detail of the ISM shown on the opposite page als the beating it withstood g the attempted burglary.

The collector ascends his neoclassical staircase. Beneath him is an untitled work by Rainer Fetting (1987, oil on canvas, 71″ x 86″). On the wall (above, right) is Adrian Wiszniewski's *Taking Medicine* (1988, oil on canvas on board, diameter 48″) and (below, left) Peter Howson's *Richard Jobson* (1988, oil on canvas, 46″ x 34″).

a Woo with a View

In his palatial London digs, collector Nelson Woo serendipitously merges art with life.

TEXT BY LOUISA BUCK
PHOTOGRAPHS BY FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG

In the entrance hall, Gordon Baldwin's *Pregnant Bowl* sits on a stone bench beneath Hermann Albert's *The Woman of Cortona* (1988, tempera on canvas, 70" x 49"). John Stefanidis designed the chair, stool, and festoon blind.

Alex Kosta's *Man with a Hat* (1963, bronze, 30″ x 20″ x 14″) keeps watch over the Stefanidis-designed pool. Henry Pim's ceramic work and, in the far corner, an untitled Philippe Hurteau painting (1987, oil on canvas, 44″ x 34″) are among the room's other adornments.

It is rare to find an entire Belgravia house in private hands, and it is even more unusual to find one that is filled with contemporary art. The neoclassical porticoes of London's most exclusive neighborhood are usually emblazoned with embassy flags, and the few mansions that are still individually owned contain more of the affluently antique than the adventurously modern. But behind the cream-colored facade of Nelson Woo's stately town house, the old joins with the new in a unique collection that is as ambitious in scope and grand in scale as are its surroundings.

Whereas most collectors confine themselves to specific disciplines, Woo has an enthusiasm with no such boundaries. For more than a decade, this slim twenty-nine-year-old aesthete from a Hong Kong family has been purchasing paintings, ceramics, glass, and objets d'art with equal vigor. "I don't like to distinguish between fine and decorative art. A beautiful thing is art, whatever medium it is," he declares with passion, his Le Corbusier–style eyeglasses gleaming. "The most important thing is how I react to it."

From skylit top-floor study to basement swimming pool, Woo has merged art with life, allowing his multifarious acquisitions to fill and animate every corner of the house—the interior completely refurbished by John Stefanidis, a designer well-known for his ability to juggle antique with modern. The range of objects reflects Woo's refreshing lack of collecting strategy.

"I'd always rather go for an individual piece than follow an overall style," says Woo. "If you are calculated, it kills the spontaneity and spoils the fun." In the reception hall, for example, a pair of nineteenth-century Italian mahogany chairs face two exuberant burgundy velvet "thrones" commissioned from the French design team Bonetti and Garouste—who also created the unorthodox carpet inlaid with metal plates—while African-born Magdalene Odundo's round-bodied ceramic vessels are accompanied by Jean Cocteau's plates and chinoiserie urns made by Doulton in the last century. Somber-hued figures painted by young Scottish artists Peter Howson and Adrian Wiszniewski hold their own against the curving neoclassical staircase.

Woo with Rainer Fetting's *Nelson Woo* (1989, oil on canvas, 47" x 35").

Two ceramic pots by Magdalene Odundo decorate the workout room.

But the diversity of Woo's taste is underpinned by some pronounced preferences. Almost without exception, his paintings are by contemporary artists, and all the work is emphatically figurative. Abstract and conceptual art do not interest him. "I want the immediate visual impact, rather than having to consciously contemplate the content of a work," he says.

Perhaps surprisingly for someone whose cultural roots are Chinese and who could probably afford any art he chose, Woo has a particular enthusiasm for young local painters. One favorite is Wiszniewski, who is Scottish despite his Polish name and came to prominence in the mid-1980s as one of the "Glasgow School"—a group of young Scottish artists who attracted attention for brash representational works that not only echoed their city's rough-and-tumble image but also suited the 1980s fashion for neo-Expressionism. Woo owns several Wiszniewski canvases, and one large painting, depicting the languorous youths who have become the artist's trademark, dominates the main drawing room. Less effete are the muscular figures painted by fellow Glaswegian Peter Howson, whose

work is also well represented.

Woo insists that he has never bought art as an investment. "You'd never collect this kind of art to make money," he says. "For me, contemporary paintings are much more interesting because there's so much to select from. If you go into old masters, all the good works already have owners." In keeping with his personal approach to collecting, Woo makes all his choices himself. He doesn't hire advisers and avoids working in tandem with particular galleries. "I hate walking into a gallery and have people trying to sell things to you. I'd rather make my own mind up." It is unusual for collectors with his kind of resources to tramp around art-college degree shows, but for Woo it is all part of the adventure. He came across the dreamlike canvases of Paul Storey while the artist was at London's Royal College of Art, and the quirky surrealism of Alexander Guy also caught his eye when the painter was still a student.

Stefanidis designed the morning room's furniture and carpet. The paintings (from left) include Paul Storey's *St. Catherine* (1988–89, acrylic on canvas, 85″ x 78″), an untitled work by John Edwards, reflected in the mirror (1983, oil on board, 36″ x 26″), and Storey's *The Magi* (1987–88, acrylic on canvas, 86″ x 78″).

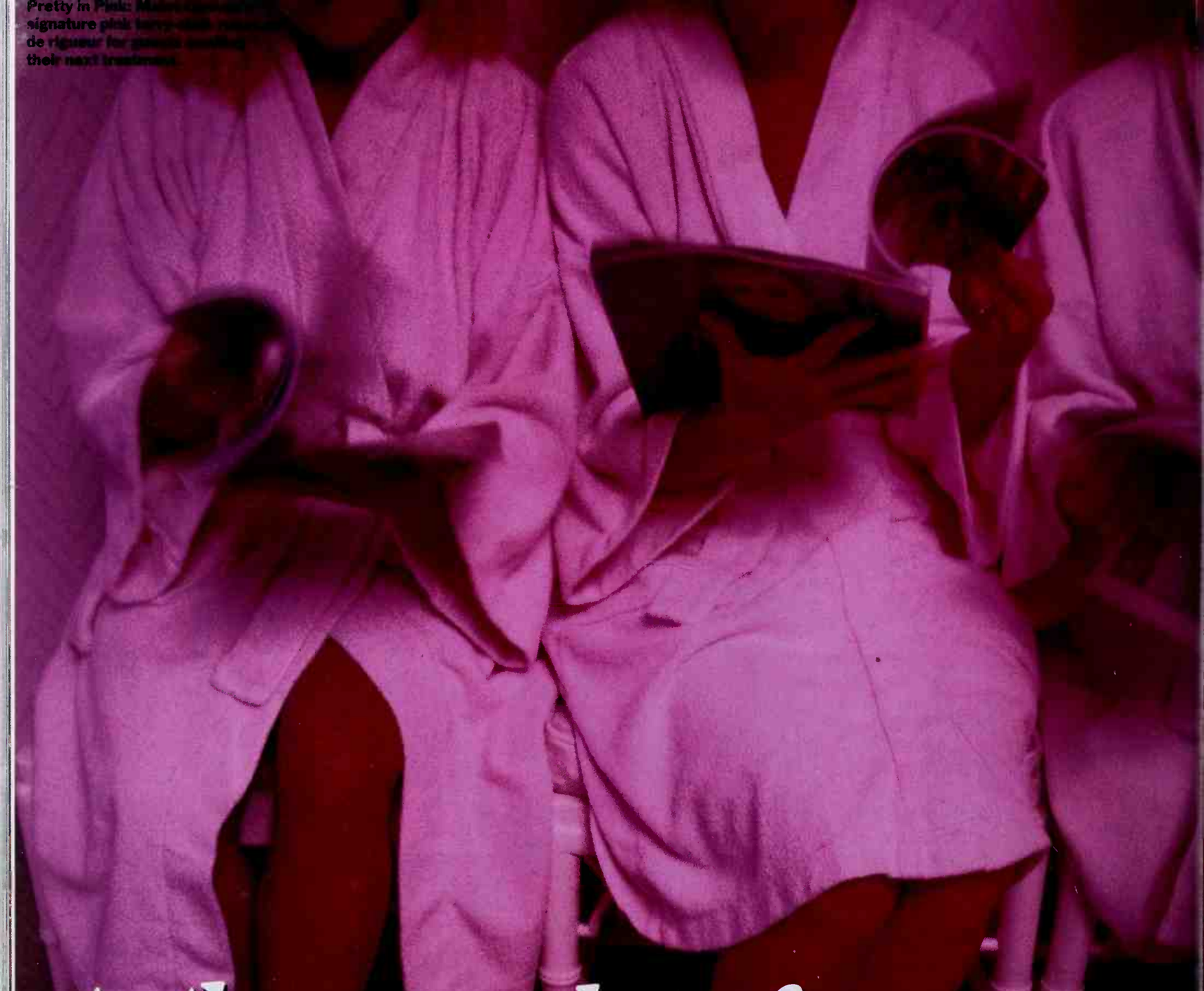
International works, such as the bold, virtuosic paintings of German artist Rainer Fetting, also make their presence felt. Fetting's style swings between fluid elegance and Teutonic thunder (and Woo has examples of both), but regardless of mood, his canvases' acid colors grab the viewer by the throat. Doesn't Woo find them exhausting to live with? "I don't buy because I've got wall space to fill," he states, opening up a large storeroom full of paintings to prove it.

Woo's abundance of glass and ceramics further highlights his dramatic taste. The range is eclectic. Contemporary and modern works predominate, with examples of older styles added to the mix, but each piece makes a unique impression. A formal dining-room table is thrown into turmoil by two writhing, multicolored-glass "Medusa head" candelabra from young British designer Simon Moore, the stone floor of the reception hall is punctuated by Gordon Baldwin's organic ceramic sculptures, and Jennifer Lee's monolithic pots anchor several rooms of the house. Nothing is there strictly for decoration, and apart from a few classic pieces by Jean Cocteau and Diego Giacometti (Alberto Giacometti's designer brother) and some unforgettable glass candlesticks by Bonetti and Garouste, the bias is again toward the contemporary and British. The work of younger-generation artists, such as Simon Moore and Steven Newell, who make meticulously etched glass platters, is in evidence, as is that of more mature craftspeople, such as Lee and Baldwin.

Woo's close relationship with his objects often extends to their makers. Many of the artists and craftspeople whose work he has bought have become his friends. Woo has seen many of his purchases evolve in the studio, and reciprocally, the artists get to see their works in situ. Adrian Wiszniewski even painted the large canvas in the drawing room specifically to be hung there. It must be good for the artists to know how much they are appreciated. "I'd never part with any piece in my collection," says Woo. "They are like babies—they grow up with me."

Along with the stately homes of Belgravia, this brand of visionary is becoming a rare species. Unlike the speculator-collectors who haunt the quick-buy secondary market, Nelson Woo simply buys what pleases him. It's not just a matter of income: few now have the inclination or the imagination to operate with such personal commitment and freedom from fashion. Earlier this century the English millionaire Edward James happily commissioned work by Salvador Dalí, Leonora Carrington, and René Magritte to keep company with his eighteenth-century furniture and Georgian silver; while in Paris, Marie-Laure de Noailles combined African sculpture, surrealist paintings, Rubens tapestries, and crushed-automobile sculptures by César. Woo, in the tradition of the great patrons of the past, blends the contemporary with the classic, indulging his remarkable eye and flair for contrasts. □

Two pink drawings by Keith McIntyre—(left) *Queens Park Waltz* and (right) *Surabaya Jonnie* (both 1988, pastel and charcoal on paper, 40" x 28")—accentuate Woo's colorful drawing room. Other objects include Walter Keeler's ceramic teapots (on radiator cover), a nineteenth-century gilt-wood stool, and a terra-cotta and oxidized-wrought-iron candlestick by Bonetti and Garouste.

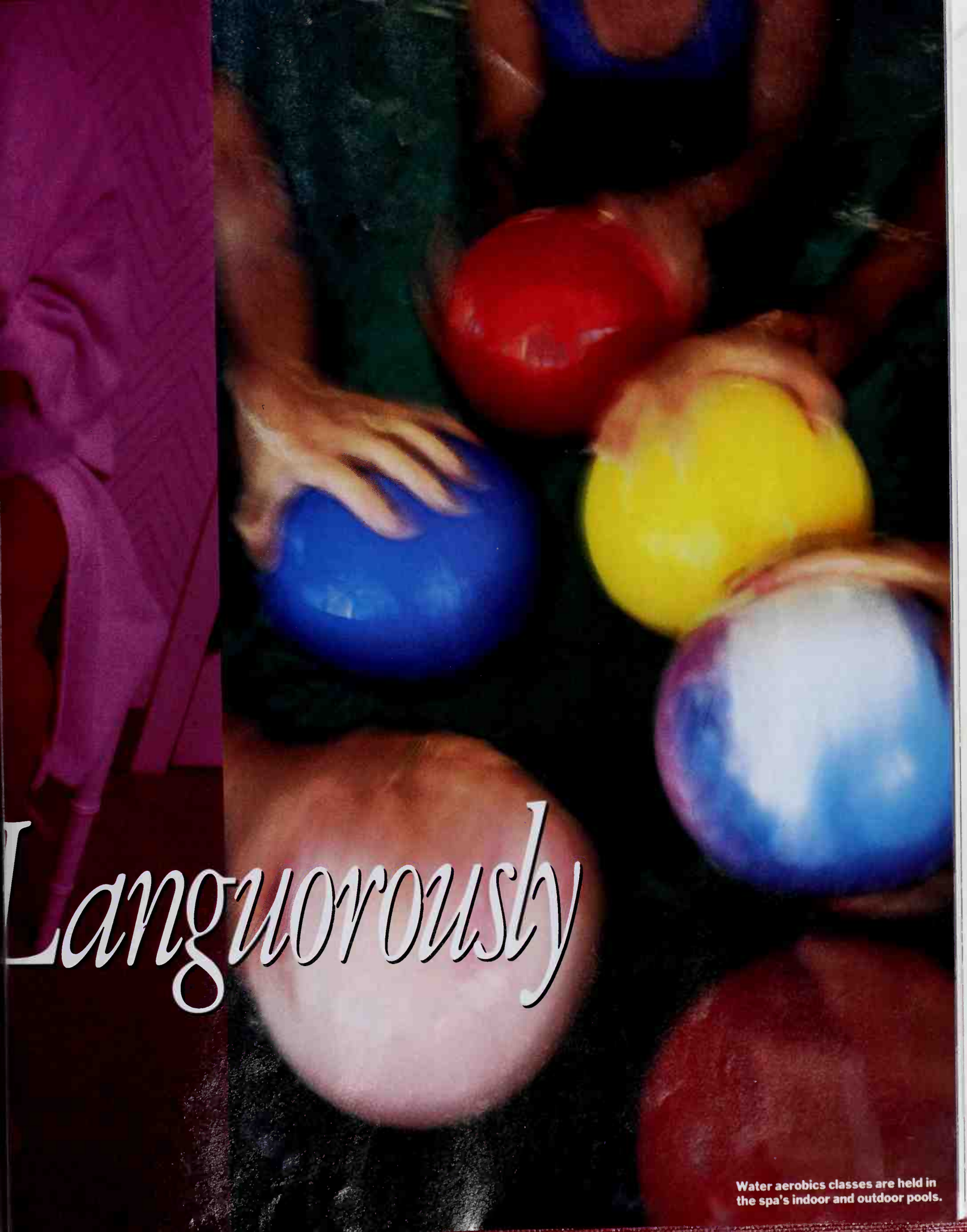


Pretty in Pink: Maine Chance's signature pink terry-cloth robes are de rigueur for guests awaiting their next treatment.

The Week of Living

Maine Chance was born in the 1930s when Elizabeth Arden invited a few well-to-do friends to the New England countryside. Her spa has since moved to Arizona, where it has become the old guard's favorite getaway. CAROL ISAAK BARDEN visits the ultimate beauty address, America's most shamelessly sybaritic retreat.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY PEGGY SIROTA



Languorously

Water aerobics classes are held in the spa's indoor and outdoor pools.

Executive Suite: The Mamie Eisenhower room, in the Lower Garden building, named for the former first lady, a frequent guest.

The entrance is nondescript and hard to find. No signs are posted along the bumpy dirt road, and when you arrive at the gate, no doorman springs forth in welcome. But once inside the entry hall of the Main House, you know that you are somewhere extraordinary. If heaven turns out to be a spa, we can only hope it has been patterned after Maine Chance.

There is something about this uncommon place that sets it apart from all other so-called fat farms in the world. Set in a dramatic desert landscape at the base of Camelback Mountain on the outskirts of Phoenix, Maine Chance provides the landed gentry a reassuring place in which to lose (or gain) a few pounds, chat, and bask the sun-drenched hours away. The founder, Elizabeth Arden, believed it was just as important to be pampered as to pant and sweat. Her early clients, with their perfectly lacquered nails and names like Morgan, Rockefeller, Ford, du Pont, and Taft, would not have been caught dead subjecting themselves to the sort of physical tribulation that requires lifting huge iron plates connected to bars.

Today's ladies of Maine Chance are emancipated from the structured kamikaze spa agendas featured at less gracious health-and-fitness getaways. Instead, relaxing in their leotards, they drink hot jasmine tea and play bridge.

Maine Chance—the monument that cosmetics built—began as a society retreat opened by Arden in 1932 at her home near Waterville, Maine. At first it was used only by her friends and patrons, and nobody paid. But so many clamored to join the exclusive get-togethers for the rich-and-social set and to undergo the Canadian-born beauty expert's regimen of diet, exercise, and gentle coddling that eventually the policy was changed and all guests became paying guests. Not just anyone with money could come, mind you, only Arden's friends and their prominent friends.

Every day begins with breakfast in bed, delivered by one of the housekeepers.

Maine Chance was almost always full, so in 1945 Arden (who had been born Florence Nightingale Graham in 1886) purchased 110 acres of Arizona desert at the northeastern end of Phoenix, the perfect habitat for winter furloughs. The Waterville spa closed in 1969, the victim of two fires, but the concept lives grandly on, some 2,700 miles away. There is a clubby ease about the "new" place, and a week at Maine Chance still feels a bit like a sorority house party. Many of the Arizona congregants are, in fact, daughters or granddaughters of the ladies who flocked to Waterville nearly sixty years before.

Elizabeth Arden had a kinder, gentler notion of what a spa should be than do most of today's beauty gurus. The Maine Chance day begins not with a march up the mountain at 6:00 A.M. but with breakfast in bed. Each morning some twenty-four housekeepers deliver it—a choice of scones fresh from the oven, piping-hot muffins, homemade granola, or Dutch-apple yogurt, with juice from the citrus trees and coffee in a pretty china pot. The tray is adorned with embroidered linens, fine silver, and flowers from the cutting garden. Beside each plate is a schedule of fitness and beauty appointments, but if there is a secret to the Maine Chance formula, it is this: everything is optional. If you feel like skipping water aerobics to lounge poolside behind your paperback, go right ahead. The only pressure applied here is by the masseuse.

The property is blissfully quiet, and nobody charges about interrupting a guest's idleness. Rambo-like fitness fanatics should take themselves elsewhere.

At the end of each relaxing day, the ladies go to dinner in the Main House. They are dressed to the nines, and so are the tables—with pale starched linens, fine china, silver, and crystal from Arden's enormous tabletop collection. At least one night each week the turn-of-the-century Capodimonte plates are brought out.

Deprivation doesn't sell here, and first-timers are sometimes aghast to learn that the

Miss Arden never liked the word *facial*, so Maine Chance guests have luxurious "face treatments" instead.

Elizabeth Arden believed it was just as important to be pampered as to pant and sweat.

Anne-Marie Jarnlof, a Swedish masseuse.

only calorie-counting is in the kitchen and that no one has to beg for extra food to supplement the somewhat sparse lunches. Pecan pie, croissants, and the calories-be-damned cheesecake are all Saturday-night house favorites. No one seems unnerved by the plate of chocolate-covered butter cookies smack dab in the middle of a table.

The Maine Chance philosophy is that "the lady has the control," explains chef Harris Golden. "No one slaps your hands here." The ladies might lose a pound or two, but if not, it doesn't matter. Weight loss is not always the point.

For those who do get out of bed, the management has organized lots of beauty and fitness activities, and most guests figure they ought to squeeze in a tiny dose of exercise between all the beauty appointments.

After seven rejuvenating days, once-tired bodies emerge rested and restored, a result of the endless buffet of rituals:

The spa's terra bath is said to be an effective anticellulite treatment.

seaweed wraps, body scrubs, terra baths, the Scotch hose, aromatic massages, and the famous Ardena body-wax bath—a cleansing treatment that requires twelve pounds of melted paraffin. By the end of the week, some guests are so calm they claim to have forgotten their zip code.

Yet the charm of Maine Chance is not the pampering alone. Guests, for as long as they stay, are the center of the universe. With a staff-to-guest ratio of almost three to one, the art of hospitality has been very nearly perfected.

"We order extra mattresses and humidifiers, bring in VCRs, rent movies, and even rearrange furniture for our ladies," says Darlene Gregory, reservations manager. "The gardener once dismantled a garden under one guest's window because she had floral allergies." When departing guests check out, they receive a box lunch for the flight home, just one more element of thoughtfulness.

The environment still reflects Elizabeth Arden's personal touch. Her style was eclectic, and nowhere is this more apparent than in the public rooms of the Main House. Sitting rooms are furnished with objets d'art and exquisite period pieces: Empire tables, a Biedermeier desk, Louis XV and XVI chairs, an eighteenth-century Italian commode, Regency tables, a French crystal chandelier. Meissen urns are filled with towering bouquets of fresh flowers, and on one polished wooden floor is a Savonnerie carpet once owned by the duchess of Marlborough. Some of the founder's favorite paintings still adorn the walls—canvases by Magritte, Chagall, and Cassatt.

There are forty-six guest rooms of varying sizes, no two identical. Most are frilly and feminine, with lots of chintz, period furniture, botanical prints, and an occasional antique. There are frequent requests for number 6 in the Main House—the nobly proportioned room was Arden's own, and it retains her writing desk and silver mirror.

Accommodations are available in seven other houses as well, and when it comes to reservations, tradition is everything. Clients grow attached to certain rooms and can be as persnickety about getting their favorites as they are about taking the same week each year.

At Hilltop House, the residence that commands the highest rates, guests pass through a private gate to a grand circular driveway. There is a library, a splendid sitting room, and a pool reserved for Hilltop guests only. Others prefer West Garden House, with its stunning views of Camelback Mountain and the nearby stream, as well as its spacious veranda for afternoon tea. Those passionate about flowers request Lower Garden House, surrounded by English and Oriental plantings. The view is particularly exquisite from Mamie Eisenhower's old room, number 1.

The gardens, shrubs, and gracious rolling lawns are all conducive to solitude and tranquillity. Orange and grapefruit groves merge happily with the flowers, and there are vistas at every eye-pleasing turn. What is striking about these gardens is their lushness: it is easy to forget that you are in the desert.

It is therefore understandable that Maine Chance inspires impressive loyalty. Even faced with bills ranging from $3,200 to $4,100 per week, 83 percent of the guests return, and 483 women have visited more than twenty-five times each. Maine Chance doesn't advertise—it doesn't have to. Word of mouth fills the house, as it always has.

In addition to social blue bloods, the clientele includes

Hollywood aristocrats and the occasional royal. Tight security means absolute privacy for all the guests. Barbara Bush might be at the next table, but it isn't nice to notice. Maine Chance was designed for ladies who would rather not have their names mentioned, please.

Twenty-five years after her death, Elizabeth Arden would be relieved to know that despite the nationwide fitness explosion and a near redefinition of the spa experience, hers is still the old-society haunt for those who have that I-was-born-wearing-cashmere-and-pearls look.

No one here worries about shortening their skirts or squeezing into a pair of Gianni Versace printed leggings. Ostentation is out. Hemlines are down. Some things change, but Maine Chance will never be one of them. For when all is said and done, good taste is forever fashionable. □

The glacial clay used in the terra-bath treatment, imported from the Canadian Rockies especially for Maine Chance.

EVENING STANDARDS

This fall, evening wear is heating up Paris and Milan. Dresses and coats are clinging closer to the body and reveling in an array of sensuous fabrics—velvets, brocades, and gem-encrusted silks. Seductively appealing, expertly cut, these looks step out of the dark and brighten the night.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY LARA ROSSIGNOL

Brown velvet evening dress by JEAN PAUL GAULTIER.

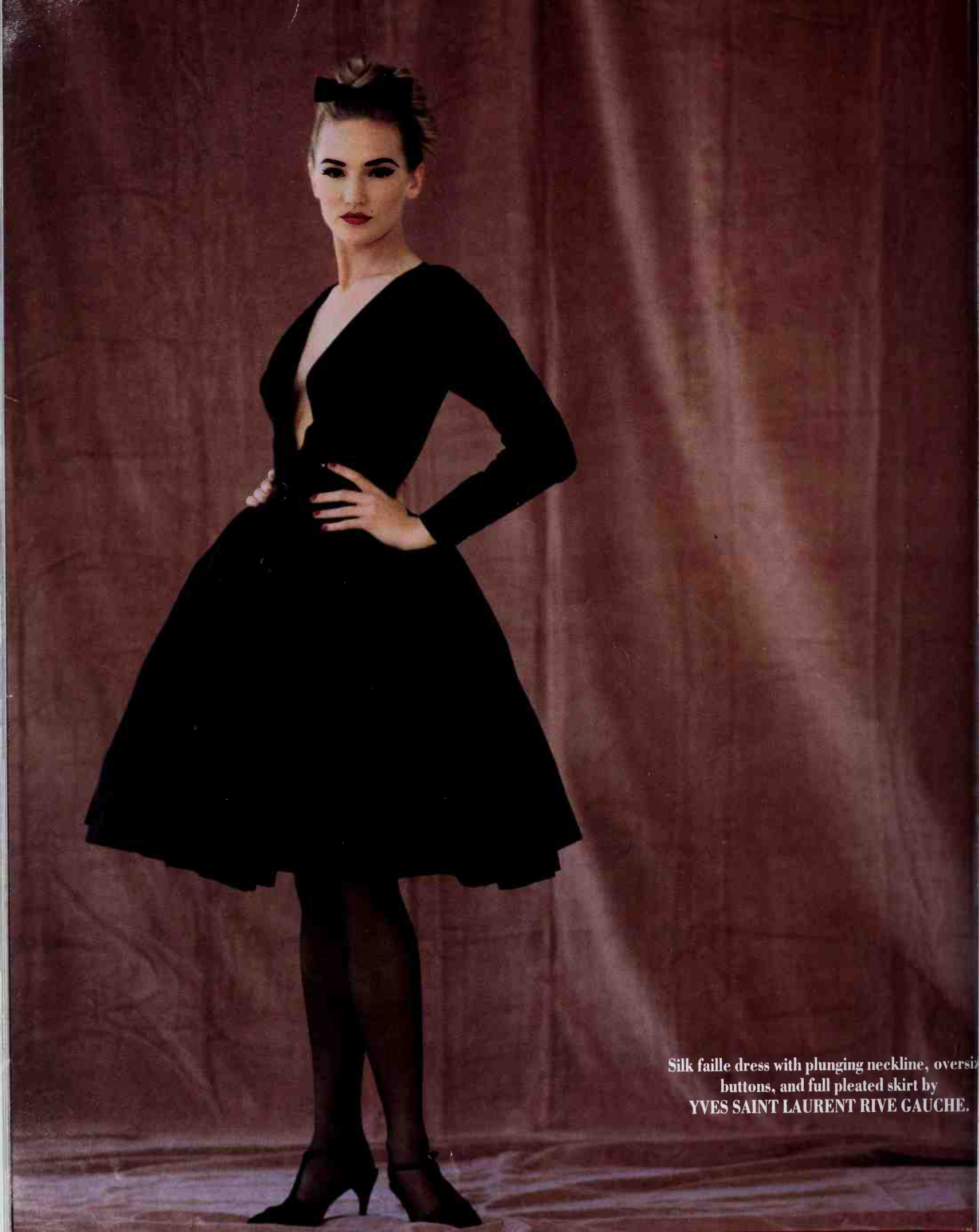
Stretch rayon/Lycra motorcycle jacket and wool gabardine long skirt by MOSCHINO COUTURE.

Details, see Shopping Guide on page 93.

Embroidered sheer blouse by
GENNY ORO.

Tiered dress with grosgrain trim and gold quilted logo earrings by CHANEL.

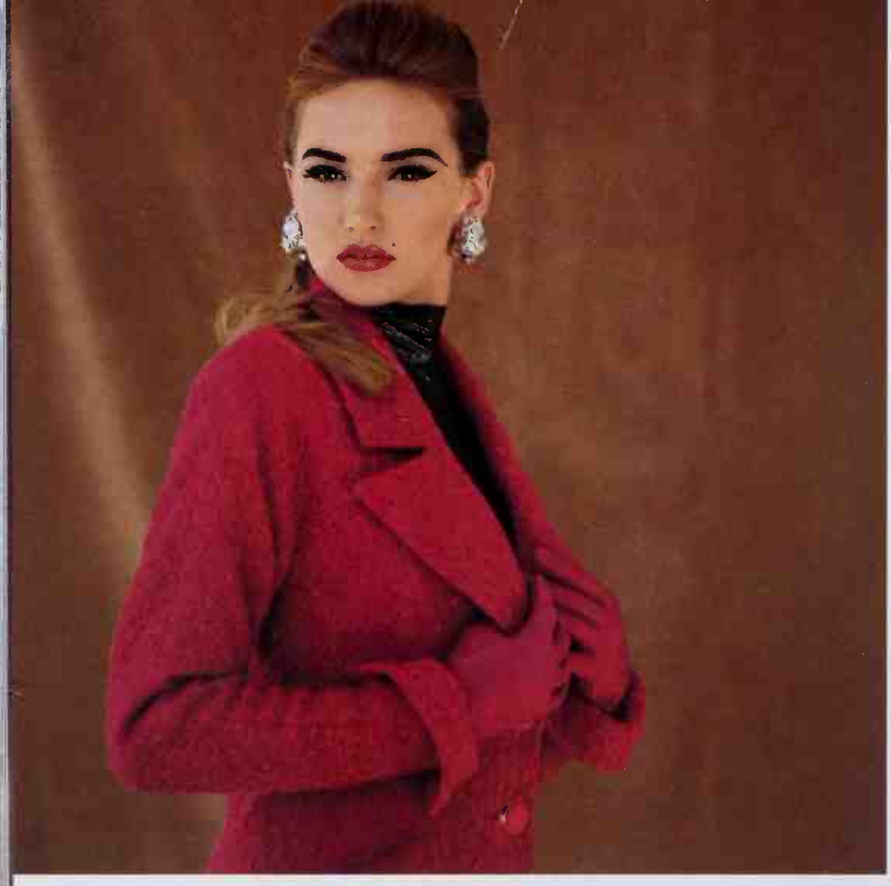
Details, see Shopping Guide on page 93.



Silk faille dress with plunging neckline, oversi
buttons, and full pleated skirt by
YVES SAINT LAURENT RIVE GAUCHE.

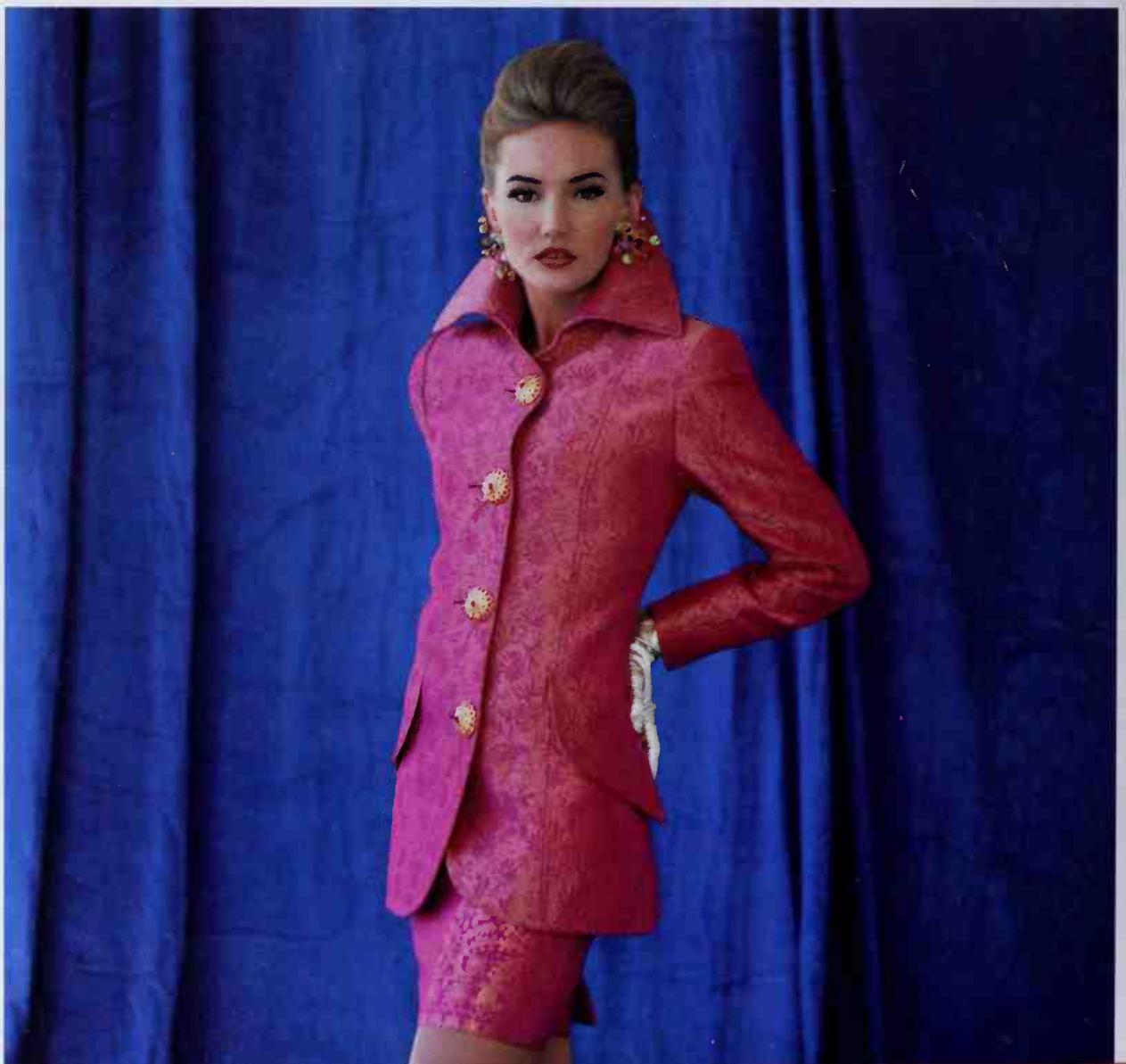
Wool coat with perforated polka dots, stretch pants with cuffs, and cotton blouse by ROMEO GIGLI.

Details, see Shopping Guide on page 93.



Chenille tweed jacket and
silver nylon-and-Lycra jumpsuit by
KARL LAGERFELD.

Metallic brocade suit with
jeweled buttons and
multicolored crystal earrings by
CHRISTIAN LACROIX.



Iridescent gold wool velvet coat with black chiffon ties, silk satin bustier dress with clear beads, stretch wool pants, and wool gloves by DOLCE & GABBANA.

Details, see Shopping Guide on page 93.

Wool jacket with velvet collar by FENDI.

Long silk gown with shirred waist and suede pumps by GIORGIO ARMANI.

Details, see Shopping Guide on page 93.

(Continued from page 18)

of the premiere, "and we have tried, by presenting these issues in forms of music, poetry, dance, and visual arts, to, at any moment, create a stage that is as complex as possible. There is no way that anybody, for example, can begin to take in the totality of the event and account for it."

Sellars has made a trademark of feisty, manic, hyperbolic enthusiasms and blanket generalizations that are preposterous, pretentious, and at the same time, utterly persuasive. And this is one of them. *Klinghoffer* is that most unlikely of modern artistic phenomena, an opera that embraces as much hype as the media can give it, that makes all the right noises toward accessibility in subject matter and musical style and theatricality, and then throws all expectation to the wind by asking the audience to find the transcendental in the familiar. *Klinghoffer* is surely the most relevant major opera currently in production, and yet its seeming lack of immediacy is one of the things many early reviews criticized it for.

Sellars practically gloats over *Klinghoffer*'s ultimately making less concession to popular taste or easy accessibility than the consortium that commissioned it and will produce it over the next couple of years surely would have liked. "I loved the dress rehearsal," Sellars said a few weeks after the Brussels performances, holding forth in the booth of an authentically aged fifties-era New York coffee shop and fountain. "Fourteen thousand video cameras from every station in the world were there. They watched the whole show and they could never tell when to turn the camera on. And suddenly, the show was over, and they hadn't filmed the big moment. Like, where was it? I thought that was great, but they were furious. 'Wait a minute, we didn't get the big moment.' "

During the press conference and in interviews, the opera's creators were repeatedly asked about whether they had the moral right to turn innocent victims such as Leon and Marilyn Klinghoffer into great tragic figures, or even to suggest that terrorists may perceive themselves as involved in a heroic holy struggle. But if *The Death of Klinghoffer* does, indeed, do those things, it incorporates images already appropriated by the world media, and it manipulates them in an entirely operatic, not a naturalistic, way. Familiar subject matter and the heated nature of its political issues are made poetic, even at times obscure, in the way only opera does. A work of lasting substance isn't instant art, something you get right away, and opening-night reaction was polite and muted, as the audience digested the opera's multitude of paradoxes. There were no signs of outrage. International reviews took just about every possible stance, but the most prudent reserved judgment; the opera simply needs time to be absorbed.

The first impression of *The Death of Klinghoffer* is of just such confusing multimedia complexity. Played against George Tsypin's sculptural set—a ten-ton, many-storied, vaguely Islamic structure that can, in various lights, appear to be the skeleton of a ship, an oil refinery, a nuclear facility, or a prison—the work provides little in the way of specific reenactment of the hijacking's events, which happen to be its least memorable moments, musically or dramatically, anyway. Sometimes, *Klinghoffer* resembles a religious passion or oratorio as much as opera, attempting *Rashomon*like to illustrate the age-old worldwide conflicts that merge into individual tragedy on that fateful voyage.

Exiled Palestinians open the opera with calm, peaceful eloquence about the sweetness of their homes but gradually break into songs of brutal violence over the hateful memory of their destruction. Exiled Jews sing of the existential pain of diaspora. During a surreal reenactment of Leon Klinghoffer's fall into the ocean, he intones a haunting Gymnopédie about the meaninglessness of his death. After choruses attempt great eschatological statements about the nature of the ocean, the night, the desert, and day—the Bible, the Koran, Melville, and Conrad are all evoked—Marilyn Klinghoffer has the last word, in a bitter and devastating aria about the import of her husband's death, feeling it should have been her instead.

In an illuminating book, *Opera and Its Symbols: The Unity of Words, Music, and Staging,* the late British writer Robert Donington offered perhaps the best justification for this kind of opera. Donington assigned opera to that mysterious place "where the promptings of irrational imagination are at their most uninhibited and the restraints of naturalism are at their least intrusive." Finding it an art almost as immediate as dreams, yet far more coherent, he observed that it "offers a royal road into the unconscious, drawing as it does on regions of the psyche where consciousness has little power to penetrate."

Such was the case with *Nixon in China,* which was first performed in Houston in 1987. Sellars, who conceived and initiated it, brought together his Harvard classmate Alice Goodman, a poet who had never written a libretto, and John Adams, a composer of successful instrumental music but untried in opera and only little experienced in vocal writing. The work they produced was a postmodern sensation: a grand spectacle about contemporary political leaders that took no obvious moral position on either Nixon or Mao, exploring not what it *meant* for Nixon to go to China but what it felt like to *be* Nixon in China. By its final act, the opera turns downright surreal, with Nixon, Chou, and Mao presented as men near the end of their careers and/or lives, reflecting in a haunting, dreamlike bedroom roundelay on what those lives meant.

Politics does have something to do with *The Death of Klinghoffer,* but mostly indirectly. *Klinghoffer* takes the view that all feelings are valid if they are deeply felt, and herein they are portrayed in eloquent verse and rapturously persuasive music. Recognizable human emotion is carried in every bar of the opera, and because no thinking person is likely to be without prejudices toward the religious and political sentiments of the Middle East, one is inevitably made to respond to the disturbance of conflicting sympathies. But entering into these interior realms of character is never easy. It requires work and doesn't come immediately. So anyone looking for political discourse is most apt to be bewildered, even disappointed, since opera always functions best on the symbolic level.

"Let's speak honestly about what happens when we go to the opera," Sellars said, finally exasperated by fielding question after question about the political nature of *The Death of Klinghoffer* during the press conference. "Say we go to *Parsifal.* Are we sitting there

conducting a philosophical debate with ourselves all evening about the ideological strengths or weaknesses of a given aria? I doubt it. I think one's experience of opera is so much more interesting than that.

"I go to opera to lose myself. It presents to me a force in which I can wander privately and get lost. And what's interesting is to have a landscape in which every person is free to have their own thoughts. At one moment a musical phrase captures you; at another moment you're lost in a visual detail; at another moment a gesture a performer makes suddenly seems so true and so moving, and the person next to you never saw that gesture.

"What is interesting about opera is that it's one of the last large-scale public experiences left in our world which remains private, a realm for each individual to experience on his or her own terms, where finally our experience is not predigested. We don't have to experience it the way we're supposed to."

Despite his own creative input, Sellars may be longest remembered for achieving the unlikely artistic mating of Adams and Goodman. It is not, by all reports, an easy collaboration, and Sellars seems to work hard to mediate between them. At the premieres of both *Nixon* and *Klinghoffer,* composer and librettist appeared cool toward each other, and it was not difficult to overhear sniffy comments from Goodman, particularly, about the composer. Like all great opera, *The Death of Klinghoffer* can be reduced to the priorities of words and music. And not surprisingly, the most talked-about fights over *Klinghoffer* concerned neither politics nor staging but the age-old question: Which is more important, text or score?

For many, what most diluted the initial impact of *The Death of Klinghoffer* was that so little of the English libretto could be understood. With the choruses, the situation was dire: perhaps one word in a hundred was clearly enunciated by the French-speaking Belgian singers. There were no surtitles, although elaborate ones had been prepared and scrims for them had been incorporated into Tyspin's set. The librettist insisted that the titles not be used, no matter how unintelligible her words might be. The composer emphatically wanted them.

The poet is generally considered the terror of the Sellars-Adams-Goodman-Morris team. A prim, proper, literary prima donna, she does not invite conversation. When asked if she has a political agenda, she answers, "I'm not there to tell people to finish their greens" and "If they don't like opera, they can go to the movies instead." She cuts questions short with remarks like "To tell you the truth, I can't tell you any more" and "I can't go further than that" when she has told you nothing at all.

In an interview the day after the premiere, she dismissed the fact that a great many words were lost to the audience. "That doesn't bother me in the slightest," she said, "and it's not because I don't think they're good. They're all there, they're underneath everything. It is as it should be.

"If people want to buy the libretto and go home and read it, that's just dandy. But if they don't want to buy it, and if they just want to come in and sit and pay attention to the opera the way opera should be paid attention to, which is getting the whole thing at once, or getting at least a little bit of the whole thing, then that's the way it should be." The way it emphatically should not be is by "saying we'll give you the bones and we'll give the internal organs, but we'll take all the muscle and skin and hair off, and that way you'll understand a little bit more about the human creature."

Opening-night reaction was muted as the audience digested the multitude of paradoxes. There were no signs of outrage.

Goodman, however annoying, is still without peer in the operatic world. Her words are, at their best, very beautiful and almost scary in their exactness of tone. Her images are burning ones. *Klinghoffer* opens with the challenging stanza "My father's house was razed / In nineteen forty-eight / When the Israelis passed / Over our street." It is a house in which one could sit on a hot day in pleasant shade, where "coolness rose like a wave / From our pure well." One of the last images is of Marilyn Klinghoffer remembering her life at home with her husband, sitting and happily reading, not having to look up from her book: "And yet it was the same / As if I had gazed at him / I knew his face so well / His beautiful smile." For Goodman, that the words came first is what really matters. For her, everything else—the music and the staging, in particular—is a "reading" of her words.

Adams once agreed with Goodman about surtitles. He, too, opposed them in *Nixon in China* until, after three years of performing the opera without them, he found that they made a world of difference when used last year during the Los Angeles production. Audiences, he discovered, paid much more attention, and not just to the words and the drama but to the music.

Opera has traditionally been considered music first, words and theater second, and even in today's more aggressive performance-art environment, where the glory of modern opera is more than ever based on the rapturous mixing of media, that equation can stand when the score is strong enough. Reading Goodman's libretto alone, for instance, the mind starts analyzing, appreciating the rhythm of the verse and the turn of phrase. One pauses and puzzles over allusions or dense passages. One looks for dramatic substance.

Proper music, on the other hand, always obscures words and their literal meanings. It changes verse structures and adds its own stronger rhythms. But music, as Donington rightly contended "far more importantly enhances [words] by means of that singular directness of feeling and of intuition which it can both induce and inflect. That is indeed the incomparable advantage of opera." And it is through the music that *Klinghoffer* both comes to life and will likely live long after the staging has been forgotten, the dance evaporated, the sets and costumes destroyed.

Soft-spoken and philosophical, Adams, sitting in a coffee house across from the Monnaie, sipping orange juice

and happily ignoring the morning reviews of *Klinghoffer,* can easily seem the serious-thinking, casually unpretentious West Coast composer (although New England–born and Harvard-trained, he has long been a resident of the Bay Area) with a store of exciting ideas and pensive good sense. Adams has developed a musical voice that also reflects that image; his compositions are often dark and emotional, informed by many American styles, and often viscerally driven by repetitive rhythmic structures.

Adams also has a wild-card alter ego he calls "the Trickster," which can pop out suddenly, surprisingly, outrageously. It shows up only occasionally in *Klinghoffer,* but spectacularly so. One hears it in the New Jersey family scene of the Prologue, which Sellars said sounds like "the pizzicato movement of Tchaikovsky's Fourth Symphony as processed by Muzak at a shopping mall."

But what Adams does—and this is the heart of the dramatic style of *Klinghoffer*—is to ingeniously turn this dopey sitcom accompaniment into something that is foreboding and serious, a mirror of the New Jersey family's psychological dynamic. Even these ordinary American Jews can have a profound spiritual attachment to Israel. Their lives may not outwardly reflect it, nor do they completely understand it. But the music tells us as much about such a family's needs as a Philip Roth novel does. It is Adams's uncanny ability to play out the drama of musical styles, the accessible with the more sophisticated, that conveys the scope of feeling and fear for a great and alarming tragic drama.

"Someone asked me what I felt the first time I heard the first chorus," said Sanford Sylvan, the baritone who is both the riveting Klinghoffer and the father in the New Jersey scene. "And I said I felt this incredible mixture of fear, shame, and excitement. The music says so much of these incredible dark qualities that I think John has explored so successfully. It's not scary music, but it's terrifying."

Sylvan, who is Jewish but evinces strong sympathies for the Palestinian people, worried that some Americans may have trouble with that first chorus of Exiled Palestinians but will be all right if they hang in there a bit: "The opening chorus of the Palestinians has this galvanizing force in a kind of outward expansion mode. Then we do the New Jersey scene, and I always feel that the chorus of Exiled Jews pulls the whole company toward the stage because we're going to go on for the first act. But it also pulls us completely into ourselves. You can hear just that descending violin line and be drawn in. John draws everybody in, like wrapping the whole theater in the saddest thing I've ever heard. It's so far away and sad and longing and yearning."

It could be that the greatest political statement is made in the most abstract, least referential language of the opera—the orchestral score—in such details as a descending violin line. It is here, in rich colors, in rhythms that never quite get centered on the beat, in the beautifully aching solo instrumentals and the lonely, indefinable oboe melodies, that the opera's atmospheres are created, its night fears made palpable, its issues of life and death made too real.

"I'll never forget the first night we did it with orchestra," recalled Sylvan. "Always with John the difference between piano and orchestra is enormous, and when the hijacking started, we were acting up a storm and really getting into it. But when Stephanie [Friedman, the terrorist Omar] came running over with the rifle, I kind of reared back and tears flew out of my eyes, and she got so freaked out that she said, in a high, little voice, 'It's only me.' It's so powerful, we just got completely gripped by it."

So, too, will audiences as the music becomes better known, as the staging finds its focus, as the issue of surtitles gets resolved (Sellars said he is working on it and expects to use them in America), and as the opera travels the world. The Klinghoffer family has had nothing to say about the work, and there probably is not much they could or should say. It represents them even less realistically than *Nixon in China* does Tricky Dick. Yet now they will be long remembered. They have, through *The Death of Klinghoffer,* become part of our culture, symbols of the force of tragedy through which we can confront ourselves—as well as our fears and inspirations—in the way that only opera allows us to do. □

PHOTO SOURCES

Page 4: (clockwise, fourth from top) Detail from tabletop in drawing room: ceramics, a lemon, and leaf vase, by Richard Slee. Three etched-glass vases by Simon Moore. Table by Bonetti and Garouste. **Page 21:** Jackson Pollock, *Untitled* (ca. 1946–47, brown ink on paper, 8 7/8″ x 11 7/8″). **Pages 34–35:** Mercedes-Benz 600SEL courtesy Mercedes-Benz, Stuttgart. **Page 39:** Photograph from *Dean Chamberlain's Flowers,* CPC Publishing, 1991. **Page 47:** Robert Indiana, *Love* (1967, serigraph in color, edition 250, 34″ x 34″). **Page 49:** (top) Robert Indiana, *American Dream #5* (1980, serigraph, one of five sheets in colors, 26 11/16″ x 26 11/16″ each); (bottom) General Idea, *AIDS* (1987, acrylic on canvas, 30″ x 30″). **Page 50:** (left) Robert Indiana, *Hallelujah* (1969, acrylic on linen). (right) *KVFV* (1990, edition 50, 77 1/8″ x 53″). **Page 64:** (left) Peter Howson, *Richard Jobson* (1988, oil on canvas, 46″ x 34″); (bottom) Rainer Fetting, *Untitled* (1987, oil on canvas, 71″ x 86″); (above, right) Adrian Wiszniewski, *Taking Medicine* (1988, oil on canvas on board, diameter 48″). **Page 65:** Hermann Albert, *The Woman of Cortona* (1988, tempera on canvas, 70″ x 49″). **Page 66:** (far corner) Philippe Hurteau, *Untitled* (1987, oil on canvas, 44″ x 34″). **Page 67:** (top) Rainer Fetting, *Nelson Woo* (1989, oil on canvas, 47″ x 35″). **Page 68:** (left) Paul Storey, *St. Catherine* (1988–89, acrylic on canvas, 85″ x 78″); (right) Paul Storey, *The Magi* (1987–88, acrylic on canvas, 86″ x 78″). **Page 69:** (left) Keith McIntyre, *Queens Park Waltz* and (right) *Surabaya Jonnie* (both 1988, pastel and charcoal on paper, 40″ x 28″). **Page 90:** Philip Smith, *Dutch Alchemy* (1990, oil and wax on canvas, 72″ x 44″). **Pages 102–103:** Dosso Dossi (ca. 1530, oil on canvas, 70½″ x 85½″). **Page 104:** Valentin de Boulogne, *Les Tricheurs* (ca. 1625, oil on canvas, 47⅛″ x 59¼″). **Page 105:** Pontormo, *Portrait of Cosimo I de' Medici* (1537; oil on panel, transferred to canvas; 36¼″ x 28⅜″). **Page 110:** (middle) photographed exclusively for *Connoisseur* by Michel Haddi/Visages. **Page 112:** (top) Al Held, *P* (1959; acrylic on paper, laid down on Masonite; 29″ x 24″); (bottom) Giacomo Zoboli, *Angel* (ca. 1740, black-and-white chalk on pink-apricot paper, 16″ x 10″). **Page 113:** J. B. Yeats, *Clear Water* (1954, oil on canvas, 22″ x 29″). **Page 114:** Sandro Boticelli, *Venus and Mars* (wood, painted area 27″ x 67½″). **Page 115:** Dieric Bouts, *The Virgin and Child with Saints Peter and Paul* (wood, painted area 26⅔″ x 20″).

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the 1940s and a huge black-and-white Ellsworth Kelly zigzag from 1960, several million dollars' worth of art in a surprisingly small showroom space. (Most of McCoy's Pollocks are said to be housed elsewhere, an indication of the considerable secrecy that surrounds them, however few or many may be left.) McCoy's refusal to exploit the family connection at the expense of living artists is one of the things that impress many professionals in the field, including art critic Robert Rosenblum, who says, "Jason is an old-fashioned person, morally and ethically. He's a time capsule personality in a world of nouveau cutthroat people."

McCoy opened his gallery two years ago in the Fuller Building, the extravagantly handsome art deco tower on Fifty-seventh and Madison that is either the Empire State Building of the arts or its Tower of Babel, depending on your perspective (McCoy's neighbors in the illustrious structure include Robert Miller, André Emmerich, Rachel Adler, Jan Krugier, and ACA). Clearly at home in the elegant but unpretentious warren of medium-size intimate rooms he helped design, McCoy is decidedly upbeat about being uptown. "I'm so happy we didn't go to SoHo. I always wanted to come to Fifty-seventh Street," he admits as he watches traffic crawl up Madison Avenue. "This building connotes stability. When there's a slowdown in the market, people want a sense of security. Businesses here are known to have survived hard times, and it's a part of the world where people are comfortable spending money."

McCoy has been exposed to the shock of the new since birth. It was 1947, one year before he was born, that Jackson Pollock first laid his canvases on the floor and dripped paint onto them. The rest is art history.

After two decades in the art business, McCoy has hit his professional stride, with a prestigious address and a stable of artists who have reputations for being long-term players, as opposed to some of their splashier, more celebrity-conscious colleagues. He is, however, more than a little sensitive about the fact that the Pollock-Krasner Foundation is by far his biggest piece of business. Or, to be more accurate, he is sensitive about the fact that Jackson Pollock was his uncle. He labels the suggestion of discussing it in print "an easy angle to take."

An irresistible angle would be more like it—not that McCoy, growing up in Deep River, Connecticut, saw a lot of his father's celebrated younger brother. (The only reason he doesn't carry the famous name is that Jason's grandfather LeRoy was adopted as an infant by the Pollock family; much later in life, he asked one of his own sons to change his name from Pollock to the name of his original parents, McCoy. The son whose name he asked be changed was Jason's father, Sanford.) Still, McCoy doesn't hesitate to point out a family portrait from Pollock's catalogue raisonné taken during a Pollock-McCoy family reunion at the artist's East Hampton home in 1950, a get-together that was never repeated. In it Pollock stands in the back row, his head turned to one side as if he is trying to get away from the group, while the two-and-a-half-year-old Jason sits angelically in his grandmother's lap.

ONE MIGHT SAY THAT MCCOY HAD been exposed to the shock of the new from birth. In 1947, the year before McCoy was born, Pollock first laid his canvases on the floor and dripped paint onto them. Only two years after that, *Life* magazine printed the headline "Is He the Greatest Living Painter in the United States?" below his photograph, and the rest is art history. In 1956, Pollock wrote the final chapter to his dissolute life of alcoholism, womanizing, and suicide attempts, running his 1950 Oldsmobile convertible off a dark road near his East Hampton home. He was dead at the age of forty-four.

Pollock's contact with the McCoys was intermittent at best, but he wasn't the only person in the family with artistic inclinations. Jason's father, Sanford, had gone to New York with an artistic career in mind and eventually worked in the silk-screen business. The oldest of the Pollock brothers, Charles, had some success as an artist and taught art for years.

McCoy himself claims not to have had any artistic ambitions while growing up. If he absorbed any lesson from his family about art as a career, it may have been that the only thing more difficult than failing as an artist was succeeding as one. But the early exposure (not to mention the genes) had its effect sooner or later. After a year at Boston University, Jason moved to New York. It was 1967, and if McCoy had any dreams of becoming part of the art world, he hid them even from himself. His first job was in the mailroom of the DKG advertising agency, and he left it only because he couldn't live in the city on $70 a week. His next two jobs, framing pictures at Kulicke Frames and selling prints at Marlborough Graphics, were low-level, but they exposed him to outstanding art: Larry Rivers and Franz Kline works came in to be framed; Oskar Kokoschka, Adolph Gottlieb, and Picasso prints were on display.

It took more than a decade for McCoy to realize his career ambitions. He worked for art dealer Reese Palley, who was just making the transition from kitsch to real art; McCoy went on to work for Tibor de Nagy, where he says he "discovered how hard it was to sell contemporary art." It was at de Nagy that McCoy tried to set up a separate corporation within the gallery that would sell work by name artists and use the proceeds to support lesser-known ones. He sold "the only thing I had of my own" (a Pollock, of course, and for no more than $15,000) in order to finance his plan, but de Nagy just didn't go for it. By that time—McCoy's reticence obviously long gone—he had

developed his own long-term ambitions and opened a by-appointment-only Park Avenue gallery in 1975, which quickly folded during the economic doldrums of the Ford years.

After years of working out of his apartment or for other dealers, McCoy in 1982 went into partnership with Betsy Richebourg and opened an East Seventy-first Street gallery; when she decided to get married in 1984, McCoy bought out her interest and became the sole owner. The same year Jackson Pollock's widow, McCoy's aunt Lee Krasner, died, leaving the bulk of her estate to create the Pollock-Krasner Foundation, for the purpose of providing grants to outstanding painters, sculptors, and graphic, mixed-media, and installation artists in financial need. Robert Miller was named to handle Krasner's paintings, Jason to handle Pollock's.

"Coming from such an unusual family background, art was almost a religious experience for him," artist Philip Smith says of McCoy, who is his dealer. "When you talk to him about art, it's impassioned and not about selling."

THE SIX-YEAR-OLD FOUNDATION HAS been a veritable boon for hundreds of young artists at a time when the government's support has been shrinking precipitously. With a current net worth of approximately $35 million—more than double the amount at the time of Krasner's death—the organization has given away more than $5.6 million since its inception, with awards going as high as $30,000 per artist and averaging $10,000 to $12,000. A large part of the foundation's current net worth has come from the sale of artwork, although this has been tapering off greatly in the last few years. The million-dollar question—just how many Pollocks the foundation has left—is not something McCoy is willing to talk about. The Pollock-Krasner Foundation's annual report discloses that last year, it had receivables from the sale of artwork of $661,900. The year before, the figure was roughly twice as much: more than $1.3 million.

McCoy acknowledges that *Number 21,* a major black-and-white painting done in 1951, has been sold to the Kunsthaus museum in Zurich and that *The Key,* done in 1946, was sold to the Art Institute of Chicago. He will bring out the painting *Number 22A, 1948,* an enamel on gesso on paper, and *Untitled,* a brown India ink on paper from 1946 or 1947, to be photographed. He will say that the gallery has sold "quite a few" major paintings from the foundation so far but that more drawings than paintings have been sold.

"I know there are some very fine Krasner paintings," says Charles Bergman, the foundation's executive vice president and chief operating officer. "I suspect that most of the major Pollocks are gone, although there are many wonderful drawings."

While the names of committee members—those who choose the grant recipients and the amounts they receive—are still a secret, one could safely assume that McCoy's influence, if not his very presence, is felt. McCoy was close to Krasner (he describes her as "one of the most direct and one of the brightest people I've known, the personification of what it meant to be an artist"), and no doubt it was McCoy's clear passion for new work—displayed at de Nagy almost a decade before—that led her to give him so pivotal a role in the foundation (not to mention the obvious family ties).

It's a fervency evident to everyone who works around him. "Coming from such an unusual family background, artistically speaking . . . art was almost a religious experience for him," says artist Philip Smith, who shows at McCoy. "Jason is committed to art and artists, and when you talk to him about art, it's impassioned and not about selling. This sensibility permeates the gallery." Smith has very bankable reasons to be happy with the results of McCoy's commitment. His work is in the Whitney Biennial this year for the first time, it's selling well worldwide, and it figures prominently in the collection of Florence Barron, the Detroit matron who holds the distinction of having commissioned Andy Warhol's first self-portrait, in 1962. Smith's paintings hang on a wall in Barron's Palm Springs house alongside the works of some other artists she discovered early on—Johns, Rauschenberg, Stella, and Twombly among them.

Last year McCoy hired Noëlla Fachinetti, the former head of Chanel's ready-to-wear line in the United States, to run the gallery's primary stable. Some think an ex–fashion executive is an odd choice for the job.

"Jason wanted the front room to work, and I was a businesswoman," she explains simply. "Where the gallery needed organization, he and Diana said, 'Go ahead and do it.' That was the challenge." (Diana is Diana Burroughs, McCoy's wife of fourteen years and his partner in the gallery. Friends describe her as "the glue that holds it all together." There are three children—Sanford, Jackson, and Samantha Clare—and three homes—city, country, and Florida.)

"It is amazing, one-on-one, how astute Jason is about human and artistic situations," says Lillian Kiesler, who first met Lee Krasner at the Hans Hofmann school in the 1930s and who is the widow of Frederick Kiesler, the architect-sculptor who was a longtime friend of Pollock's. "I remember times when Pollock would be baking pies—these were his golden moments—asking me questions about my work. He really wanted to *know*.

"When Jason has a warm expression, hearing about things of mine, kind of quiet and amused," she says softly, "he reminds me of Jackson." □

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Hepburn," she once said, "because we were both from New England, both of our fathers were doctors, and like her, I felt I was a little eccentric."

After graduation, Close moved to New York City and almost immediately got a job replacing Mary Ure in Hal Prince's production of *Love for Love* at the Phoenix Theatre in 1974. Later she appeared in Wendy Wasserstein's *Uncommon Women and Others* (originating the role to be played by Meryl Streep in the PBS televised version), in the Sherlock Holmes–style melodrama *The Crucifer of Blood,* and as P. T. Barnum's wife in the musical *Barnum.*

In 1981, George Roy Hill, who had won an Academy Award for directing *The Sting,* was hired by Warner Bros. to direct the movie adaptation of John Irving's best-selling novel *The World According to Garp.* Hill enlisted screen newcomer Robin Williams for the dramatic lead, and he wanted the rest of the casting to be equally bold. One of the crucial roles was that of Garp's mother, Jenny Fields, a strong-willed nurse who eventually becomes a kind of feminist messiah. Hill had seen Close on Broadway in *Barnum,* and she had made a strong impression on him. As Hill explains it, "Glenn has a combination of dignity, warmth, and an extremely rare serenity."

Her screen debut may have been late—she was already thirty-five—but it was a knockout. Even critics who felt the movie missed the spirit of Irving's novel were enraptured by Close. "Glenn Close is more than a revelation in the role of Garp's militantly feminist mother," Andrew Sarris wrote in *The Village Voice. Newsweek*'s David Ansen concurred: "Glenn Close strikes a near-perfect balance of Yankee fortitude and monomaniacal common sense. Somehow, she makes this monster madonna human."

In her first screen role, it was apparent that Close was no ordinary actress. Although a petite five foot three, she seemed larger than life on camera, and her unflappable Jenny Fields established her as a new kind of screen icon, a beatific but earthy maternal muse. There was, however, one problem with her screen debut: Jenny Fields was such a vivid, archetypal character that the role threatened to trap Close in a narrow mold. In her subsequent films—*The Big Chill, The Natural,* and *The Stone Boy*—she was again cast as a madonna, noble and nurturing and essentially asexual. The next major turning point for Close came in 1987, when she won the part of Alex Forrest, the sexually ravenous editor in *Fatal Attraction.* At first the director, Adrian Lyne, could not envision her playing the seductive villainess. "Glenn certainly wasn't an obvious choice," Lyne said, "because she's not obviously erotic. Truthfully, she sort of pursued the project." Even after winning three Academy Award nominations and playing the lead in the hit thriller *Jagged Edge,* Close had to audition for the part of Alex. Lyne was stunned by her reading. "She was very sensual," he noted. "She always plays rather white-bread nice people, so it was a real right-hand turn for her."

Close's character, the frizzy-haired, witchlike Alex, became one of the most hated women in America—a woman who even boils a child's pet bunny in her demented obsession to win a married man away from his family. But despite the audience's hisses, Close loved the role and still talks about it with the fervor of a recent EST graduate. "Alex Forrest helped liberate me," she says. "I'd always heard people say about me, 'Yeah, she can act, but can she be sexy?' And I'm a very sexual person. I just don't go around with it dripping off my body. So for me it was like this incredibly cathartic experience. I started wearing new clothes and feeling great. I never would have worn a black leather coat before doing that part."

Although the role in *Fatal Attraction* was a major breakthrough for Close, she found the experience of making the movie dispiriting. When preview audiences reacted negatively to the original ending, which saw Alex killing herself so that her lover (Michael Douglas) would be arrested for her murder, Lyne filmed a new *Halloween*-style climax that has the knife-wielding Alex shot to death by Douglas's loving wife (Anne Archer). It was the crudest kind of sensationalism, a *Death Wish* for yuppies. "The new ending turned Alex into a psychopath," Close says. "But the audience wanted my blood. That was difficult, because I really did feel it was a betrayal of my character. I thought Alex was a truly tragic figure. Of course, we started compromising with the script way before they decided to reshoot the ending. Everybody was very nervous that the little family wouldn't get reunited. The way it was originally written, I committed suicide like Madame Butterfly, and the film ended with Michael Douglas being taken to jail. It was a beautiful film noir. But that's very rough for an audience, especially an American audience, because everybody basically lost. Life's too hard, so you have to have winners, at least in the fantasy of movies."

Close believes passionately in the movies she chooses to do, and that is why she protests loudly if the script is violated. "It's very important to me, what I viscerally get off the page," she says, "and if something has gone too far away from that, it's very disturbing. I've always believed in trying to be as articulate as possible if I feel something has been changed for the worse. I don't want to waste people's time hemming and hawing, saying, 'This doesn't feel right.' But you have to earn the chance to make your point. It's exciting that as I get into more movies I find myself treated like a full collaborator."

Close's arguments with directors rarely involve her own screen image. Unlike many actors who always insist on being lovable, Close has dared to play unsympathetic characters without softening her portrayals. She once expressed her admiration for Bette Davis: "I admire her because she wasn't trying to please people. She didn't say, 'Love me.' She had the courage to play unattractive characters with only the hope that people understand them in the end." That has also been Close's achievement in *Fatal Attraction, Dangerous Liaisons,* and *Reversal of Fortune.* "The thing you have to do," she says, "is to risk people's not liking you, and for an actor, that's very hard, because you want everybody to love you. I learned a very simple, incredibly important lesson from Mike Nichols when he was directing me in *The Real Thing.* That was a very tricky part. I didn't have the equipment of language to explain to the audience why I was doing what I was doing. And it killed me because I wanted the audience to love me. I remember Mike telling me, 'If you have behaved badly, you have no right to ask for sympathy from the audience. What

you have to do is commit totally to that character.' It was a great lesson, not always easy."

Close has tried to manage her career without paying much attention to commercial considerations, and so far she has been fortunate. She has had only two outright flops—*Maxie,* a misfired supernatural comedy in which she played a contemporary woman possessed by the spirit of a 1920s flapper, and *Immediate Family,* an earnest but lame drama about infertility and surrogate motherhood. "*Maxie* was a great script," Close contends. "I don't regret doing it for a minute. *Immediate Family* I did maybe not for the purest of reasons. It's the one time I've done that. Larry Kasdan [director of *The Big Chill* and producer of *Immediate Family*] called me and asked me to do it, and I'd walk on my knees to New Delhi for Larry Kasdan. Yeah, it hurts if you have a failure. Luckily those films were a few years apart. If you have two or three in a row, you're shaky."

If Close hasn't yet had her *Sophie's Choice,* a juicy dramatic vehicle revolving entirely around her, that may be because she doesn't have the vanity or single-minded drive of many movie stars. She likes the camaraderie of theater and film and savors being part of a gifted ensemble. "Glenn gave two things to *Brooklyn Laundry,*" says director James Brooks. "First was her talent, and then she helped to make the company a company. The actors shared a dressing room. She doesn't have some stars' ego. It was called great manners in a kinder day. Today it's a miracle."

"Working with Glenn, there is no competition, no trying to outshine each other," says Jeremy Irons. "She's very supportive and helpful, which is quite rare between actors. She will make suggestions to me even about a scene she's not in, and she's completely frank. And she won't take offense if I tell her something she does is boring."

Most of Close's pals are the actors she has worked with on stage or screen—Kevin Kline, William Hurt, Mary Kay Place, Swoosie Kurtz, Jeremy Irons, Mary Beth Hurt. "I mainly make my friends through work," Close says. "If you go through a good experience together, there's a certain bond that's created. You've had to risk together and be vulnerable and expose yourself emotionally, sometimes even physically. I get great joy from that and great inspiration. I was just talking on the phone to Johnny Depp. I wrote him a letter after I saw *Edward Scissorhands* because I thought his performance was so wonderful. This life is hard enough, so we have to support one another."

Some actors find the world of show business insular and seek to broaden their horizons. Close, on the other hand, feels little desire to socialize with civilians. "I was married once to a businessman and lived on Fifth Avenue," Close says, "and I felt like a total alien. I'm happy with my own kind." Nevertheless, she doesn't live in the hub of Manhattan or Hollywood. She has a large home in rural Westchester County, New York, which she shares with producer John Starke and their daughter, Annie. Starke and Close met while she was filming *The World According to Garp,* then reconnected a few years later and moved in together. They have not married. Close's two previous marriages—to Cabot Wade and businessman James Marlas—were both short-lived, and she is not eager to rush into a third. Close feels her success and her independent spirit have intimidated most men. As she once said, "It's difficult for men—who have traditionally been out in the world and visible—when the roles are switched. It's hard to find someone to deal with that. But John's balanced. He's his own person."

Although Close did not feel a burning desire to have a child, she finds that her daughter has led her through some rewarding transformations. "I think I've been quite controlled in my life, but now it bores the shit out of me. I'm trying to do things that will help flush that away. I was raised with a certain austerity and the work ethic, and it was a part of my upbringing. You're not taught how to have fun. I think you have that capacity when you're a child, but you can lose it if it's not nurtured in you. I see it in my daughter, and I'm determined that she's going to know how to have fun, not be fearful about things. We're here for such a short time. Annie is much more outgoing than I ever was as a child. I was very closed, so it's lovely to see her."

Close looks forward to branching out into other areas of show business and taking more chances in her work. At the same time, she recognizes that Hollywood has always offered limited opportunities to women as they age. "That probably will be a problem for me," she concedes. "Hopefully, I'll stay intact for a couple more years. But I also hope I'll have other interests outside movies."

Her survival is hardly in question. "Glenn comes from that pioneer stock," says Irons. "She's tough on everyone, especially herself. She's used to overcoming hardships. I think she could survive almost anywhere."

Up until now she's hesitated to use her strength in the world beyond the footlights. Because of her youthful experiences in conservative political groups, she has resisted political powwows. But she has now decided to become more active and says she's "definitely not conservative." She participated in a pro-abortion march on Washington, and she has also grown increasingly interested in the environmental movement. "I feel more and more strongly about what's happening to our world," Close says, "and so I might slowly, carefully get more involved. I've done things in wildlife conservation. I don't think it's a fad. I don't think it's chic. I just think it's a matter of life and death. I think the government essentially is for shit. They have no sense of responsibility for children, old people, education. Even with my wariness of groups and organizations, I think it's time to declare myself. That is a new thing for me."

It would be a loss, however, if Close retreats from movies before snaring a few more choice roles, roles that tap some of her hidden depths. Mary Kay Place, who got to know her when they were making *The Big Chill,* takes note of some of her friend's contradictions when she says, "Glenn has a formal, almost regal appearance, but who she really is is someone who's most comfortable in sneakers, sweatpants, and a corduroy jacket. I remember one night when we were dancing at a beach house that Kevin Kline and Jeff Goldblum were sharing. At first Glenn was so shy that we had some trouble talking her into dancing at all, but once she got with it, I'd have to say there was a quality of wild abandon about her dancing." Her audiences have not yet had a chance to see that hedonistic dance, but it's something to look forward to. □

SHOPPING GUIDE

Cover: Silk gold-lamé jacket with petticoat, about $3,250. Linda Dresner, NYC and Birmingham, MI; Janet Brown, Port Washington, NY; Maxfield, Los Angeles. **Page 4:** Wool flannel swing coat with three zippers, about $1,965. Claude Montana, Beverly Hills; I. Magnin, San Francisco; Saks Fifth Avenue, NYC. Silverplate double-square earrings, about $150. Nordstrom, Seattle, Los Angeles; Saks Fifth Avenue, NYC; Mary Jane Denzer, White Plains, NY. **Page 23:** Silk blouse with ruffled sleeves, about $1,175. Jimmy's, Brooklyn; L'Animale, Englewood, NJ. Silk bell-bottom pants, $667. By special order through Katharine Hamnett, London. **Page 41:** Cropped wool jersey turtleneck, about $255. Corset with diamonds, about $955. Gloves with diamonds, about $425. Nuages, Aspen; Maxfield, Los Angeles; Serenella, Boston; Bagutta, NYC; Blake, Chicago; Fred Segal Couture, Santa Monica, CA; Neiman Marcus, Dallas. Cotton-blend stretch velvet pants, about $350. Polo/Ralph Lauren, Madison Avenue, Dallas; Bloomingdale's, NYC. **Page 42:** Embroidered bird pattern on black silk roll-pocket coat dress, $1,078. OMO Norma Kamali, NYC. Sterling silver and white pearl earrings, $550. Artwear, NYC. Everyday Sheer hosiery in Noir by Fogal of Switzerland, $14. Fogal of Switzerland, NYC, Chicago, Beverly Hills, San Francisco, Toronto. Card table, $15,000; armchair, set of four, $9,000; silk-and-wool pumpkin-colored paisley shawl, $3,000. Kentshire Galleries, NYC (all items one of a kind and subject to prior sale). Indian hand-knotted rug, $5,995. ABC Carpet & Home, NYC. "Nancy" old-fashioned glasses, about $71 each. Baccarat, NYC; Neiman Marcus, Dallas. Clay poker chips with solid-walnut carousel, $175. Blatt Billiards, NYC. **Page 44:** Long iridescent silk taffeta coat, about $1,450. Available in November at Bergdorf Goodman. **Page 76:** Dress with convertible jacket (not shown), $3,450. Bloomingdale's, NYC; Dayton's, Minneapolis; Carla Martinengo, Dallas. Long silk satin opera gloves with gold dice, $950, and 18k gold-plated earrings, $450, by Isabel Canovas. Isabel Canovas, NYC. T-strap gold metallic shoes by Yves Saint Laurent Footwear. Ottoman with wool gros point fabric and maple legs by Roy McMakin, $450. Domestic Furniture Co., Los Angeles. Ultrasheer hosiery in Blossom by Fogal of Switzerland, $49. Fogal of Switzerland, NYC, Chicago, Beverly Hills, San Francisco, Toronto. **Page 77:** Jacket, about $1,400. Skirt, about $550. Barneys New York; Bergdorf Goodman; Mary Chancis, Fort Lee, NJ; Sasha Frisson, Atlanta. "Cava" suede pumps by Stephane Kélian, $265. Stephane Kélian, NYC, Beverly Hills. 18k gold-plated charm bracelet, $1,100, and suede trapezoid handbag with dice handles, $3,750, by Isabel Canovas. Isabel Canovas, NYC. Gold chain necklace with woven leather by Chanel, $745. Selected Chanel boutiques nationwide. Suede gloves by LaCrasia, $50. The Accessory Shop, NYC; Howard's, Torrington, CT; Shauna Stein, Los Angeles. Everyday Sheer hosiery in Noir by Fogal of Switzerland (see details for page 42). **Page 78:** Blouse, about $12,000. Grace Jones, Salado, TX; Neiman Marcus, selected stores nationwide. Gold resin earrings with hand-blown glass stone and cut-crystal stars, about $205. Ultimo, Chicago; Neiman Marcus, Dallas, Chicago. **Page 79:** Dress, $3,825. Chanel, NYC, Beverly Hills, Palm Beach. Earrings, $275. Chanel, NYC, Washington, D.C., Chicago. Suede pumps with silk laces by Fendi, $350. Fendi, NYC; Stamford, CT; Bal Harbour, FL. Sheer nylon gloves by LaCrasia, $25. The Accessory Shop, NYC; Howard's, Torrington, CT; Shauna Stein, Los Angeles. "Spine Chair" of black hand-wrought iron by André Dubreuil, $3,578. Modern Age, NYC. Everyday Sheer hosiery in Noir by Fogal of Switzerland (see details for page 42). **Page 80:** Dress, about $3,375. Yves Saint Laurent Rive Gauche, NYC, Washington, D.C., Chicago; Neiman Marcus, Dallas. Grosgrain t-strap shoes by Maud Frizon Club, $275. Maud Frizon, NYC. Everyday Sheer hosiery in Noir by Fogal of Switzerland (see details for page 42). **Page 81:** Coat, $4,319. Spazio Romeo Gigli, NYC. Pants, about $647. Neiman Marcus, Beverly Hills; Charivari, NYC. Blouse, about $341. Linda Dresner, NYC; I. Magnin, Beverly Hills, San Francisco. "Carovia" brown suede ankle boots by Stephane Kélian, $375. Stephane Kélian, NYC, Beverly Hills. **Page 82:** Jacket, about $1,750. Charles Sumner, Boston; Stanley Korshak, Dallas; Carol Rollo Riding High, NYC. Jumpsuit, about $575. Linda Dresner, Birmingham, MI; Neiman Marcus, Beverly Hills; Panache, Millburn, NJ. Matte-satin gloves by LaCrasia, $20. The Accessory Shop, NYC; Howard's, Torrington, CT; Shauna Stein, Los Angeles. Silver nugget-shaped earrings with clear crystal stones, about $165. Neiman Marcus, Dallas, Chicago; Nordstrom, McLean, VA. Suit, about $3,190. Holt Renfrew, Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver. Earrings, about $665. Neiman Marcus, Dallas, Beverly Hills; Saks Fifth Avenue, NYC; Susan of Burlingame, Burlingame, CA. Gold leather gloves by LaCrasia, about $60. The Accessory Shop, NYC; Howard's, Torrington, CT; Shauna Stein, Los Angeles. Ultrasheer hosiery in Blossom by Fogal of Switzerland (see details for page 76). **Page 83:** Coat, $1,975. Bustier dress, about $1,495. Pants, about $455. Gloves, about $145. All at Coco, Coconut Grove, FL; Serenella, Boston; Bagutta, NYC. 24k vermeil filigree ring with crystal drop by Linda Faddis, $80. Linda Faddis, NYC; Bill Loya, Salt Lake City; Van Buren, Los Angeles. Ultrasheer hosiery in Blossom by Fogal of Switzerland (see details for page 76). **Page 84:** Jacket, $2,100. Fendi, NYC; Stamford, CT; Bal Harbour, FL. Black velvet hat by Victoria DiNardo, $275. Victoria DiNardo Fine Millinery, NYC. Silver spiral earrings with rhinestone stars by Dominique Aurientis, about $310. Savannah, Santa Monica, CA. **Page 85:** Gown, about $3,600. Holt Renfrew, Montreal, Vancouver; Bloomingdale's, NYC; I. Magnin, San Francisco. Pumps, $250. Giorgio Armani, NYC, Beverly Hills, Boston. Gilded leather cuffs with amethyst and pearl inlays by Linda Faddis, $300. Linda Faddis, NYC; Bill Loya, Salt Lake City; Van Buren, Los Angeles. Ultrasheer hosiery in Blossom by Fogal of Switzerland (see details for page 76).

(Continued from page 51)

dious songs" in unison—was a personal favorite. The sentiments of the poem are also a far cry from the harassed and marginalized position in which he finds himself today.

At the beginning, his studio in New York was on Fourth Avenue, looking directly into the loft of Willem de Kooning, whom Indiana says he could watch as the older artist painted his great abstract expressionist canvases in the nude. (This was as close to abstract expressionism as Indiana ever wanted to come.) He supported himself by working in an art-supply store on Fifty-seventh Street. One day in 1956 he sold a Matisse postcard to Ellsworth Kelly. Kelly, at age thirty-three a painter of ambiguous abstracts, had returned from Europe two years earlier, where he had studied art under the G.I. Bill, as Indiana had done. The two struck up a special relationship (though they are no longer friends). "Ellsworth was the most important person in my life," Indiana claims. "And by being the most important person in my life, he influenced a little bit of art history."

Kelly persuaded Indiana to use bold, primary colors in a hard-edge format, as he did in his own ground-breaking paintings. "When I first knew him," recalls Kelly, "he was painting strange figurative things, with heads like eggs. I would try to influence him to go abstract."

Indiana did not go abstract for long, but with Kelly's support, his career did get under way. As soon as they met, Kelly told Indiana about a string of rugged old shipping buildings at Coenties Slip, down at the very tip of Manhattan, where he could find a decent loft for thirty dollars a month, and Indiana moved there. The ancient alley, which overlooked the East River along an undeveloped edge of Manhattan, had poetry enough for Indiana, having been immortalized by Melville in the opening of *Moby-Dick:* "There now is your insular city of the Manhattoes belted round by wharves as Indian isles by coral reefs—commerce surrounds it with her surf. . . . Circumambulate the city of a dreamy Sabbath afternoon. Go from Corlears Hook to Coenties Slip, and from thence, by Whitehall, northward. What do you see?—Posted like silent sentinels all around the town, stand thousands upon thousands of mortal men fixed in ocean reveries." (Indiana's loft has since made way for a brown brick skyscraper on Vietnam Veterans Plaza, near the noisy South Street Seaport tourist site.)

By 1958, Indiana was painting large, bold geometric motifs, such as a yin-and-yang-like ginkgo leaf, on wood. These resembled Kelly's abstract compositions but also hinted at the stylized realistic forms—stars, banners, and road signs—of Indiana's pop works to come.

A month or two after Indiana moved to Coenties Slip, Kelly followed, and a little subculture quickly arose that harbored many of the artists who would shape the sixties. Robert Rauschenberg and Jasper Johns shared a building around the corner from Indiana, and their close friend and collaborator, the composer John Cage, was on Corlears Hook, a little farther up the waterfront. "It was comfortable there," says Cage. "Even though we were poor, we lived with such a view—from Brooklyn and Queens across to the Statue of Liberty—that life was enjoyable and not oppressive."

Kelly also installed Jack Youngerman and Agnes Martin in lofts on Coenties Slip. Martin brought her devotion to Gertrude Stein, and Youngerman brought his wife, the actress Delphine Seyrig, who after starring in Alain Resnais's *Last Year at Marienbad* bestowed an air of post-existentialist French chic on the grubby surroundings. In 1957, Indiana and Youngerman set up a life-drawing studio on the slip, and one of the young painters who later used it was James Rosenquist, whom Kelly settled into the community in 1960.

Although there were divisions among the little band of artists, they were all unified in isolation from the swaggering abstract expressionist heroes of Greenwich Village by their softer, more sophisticated sensibilities and from the uptown art scene by their indigence. Only Johns and Rauschenberg had glimpsed success. Cy Twombly, whose scrawly gray paintings are now the toast of the auction houses, was forced to borrow Indiana's studio to paint in while Indiana was away at work. And Indiana, for his part, would often attend art openings uptown because he needed to eat.

In addition to their isolation, the hidden homosexuality of the subculture's prime movers prompted cliquish behavior—secrecy and ambiguity on the one hand, exaggerated conformity on the other. Like Whitman, who wrote, "I dare not tell it in words, not even in these songs," more than one artist on the waterfront used code words and symbols to stand in for forbidden subject matter. By depicting the inside of the proverbial Closet, their art epitomized the conflicted gay sensibility of the day.

Indiana and Kelly became close, and there are many intimate line drawings by Kelly, a few of which show Indiana asleep. Indiana has framed them and hung them in a votive "Ellsworth Kelly room" on Vinalhaven. After a few years on the slip, however, the inevitable rifts and recriminations set in. Kelly "became very busy," says Indiana. "He just became obsessed with his career and . . . didn't have time for me." Indiana, according to Kelly, "was a difficult guy with a chip on his shoulder. We had fights, terrible fights, and I stopped going to see him."

Johns and Rauschenberg kept their distance from almost everybody. To Indiana, the couple seemed like snobs, "very unfriendly." He says, "Jasper feels that I invaded his territory . . . [and] there was an antagonism between Rauschenberg and Kelly because somewhere along the line Rauschenberg did something to Kelly and Kelly never let them into the building."

Indiana tells one of his favorite stories about life on the waterfront to illustrate his point: "One night, before my eyes," he says, "a ship collided with a tanker. They burst into flames, and the oil on the river was burning as well. The crews of the ships had to swim underwater to safety. The only person who died was a journalist covering the story who had a heart attack. The fire started under the Brooklyn Bridge, but because the East River is not a river but a tidal basin, the ship floated under the Manhattan Bridge, and that bridge caught on fire. And because of the subway tracks, the electricity was throwing sparks. I ran to tell Ellsworth Kelly, and on the way yelled out to Johns and Rauschenberg that the river was on fire, but they ignored it. They came to their window,

but they had a carefree attitude, a let-'em-die attitude."

Indiana himself, however, was sufficiently moved by the scene to portray it in his *Fire Bridge* painting, which shows the Brooklyn Bridge illuminated by a fiery, apocalyptic glow.

It wasn't until 1961 that anyone took much notice of Indiana as an artist. But that person was Alfred Barr, the Museum of Modern Art's director of collections, who had helped put Jasper Johns on the map two years earlier. Indiana was invited to participate in a little exhibition downstairs from the Martha Jackson Gallery, and Barr visited the show the day after it closed. He bought Indiana's *The American Dream,* a dramatic star-spangled canvas with a title lifted from Edward Albee's play and imagery lifted from pinball machines. It is a landmark piece in the development of pop art—linking the "high" abstract art of Kelly to the "low" art of sign writing and echoing the hectic colors and energy of Stuart Davis and the startling frontality of Johns.

Soon, Indiana began to live The Dream. The pop art onslaught was under way, and he was part of the gang. "Pop art was simply a reaction to the commercial mentality of America, and I was a peripheral figure," said Indiana on one occasion. Another time, however, he proudly declared: "There are six pop artists. I am one of the six."

His work was part of "The Art of Assemblage" show at the Modern in 1961. The following year, he was invited to participate in the show that launched pop—"New Realists" at the Sidney Janis Gallery—and he was picked up by Eleanor Ward for a solo show at her Stable Gallery, where his stablemates would include Andy Warhol and the pop sculptor Marisol.

In 1963, he had an entire room devoted to his art at the Museum of Modern Art's "Americans" show. It was, he says, "one of the most important, most exciting things in my life." According to David Bourdon, "many artists, including Andy Warhol, were jealous of Indiana. They were jealous that he was in the 'Americans' show and that he was one of the most discussed artists in the show."

In many ways, Indiana's works provided the clearest examples of the pop aesthetic. In a series of paintings of the numbers 0 through 9, now in the collection of Fiat chairman Gianni Agnelli, Indiana appropriated the figure 5 from a 1928 painting by Charles Demuth. The number-5 painting is a prime example of pop art's voracious appetite for using preexisting graphics. (It was also a premonition of the appropriation epidemic of the 1980s.) Indiana's numerous series of number paintings and prints, moreover, are classic pop because of their serial nature; like Warhol's silk screens and the elegant repetitions of the minimalist artists, Indiana's numbers emphasize that a painting is a link in a chain of associations and that a work of art invariably gets its meaning from its context.

Among the "six" pop artists, including Roy Lichtenstein, James Rosenquist, Claes Oldenburg, and Tom Wesselmann, nobody was more aggressive about getting to the top than Warhol. To promote Stable Gallery and give it a pop art profile, Warhol suggested that he and Indiana collaborate on *Eat,* a movie to be named after one of Indiana's most blatant pop paintings.

The two *Eat*s, Indiana's and Warhol's, actually have little to do with each other, just like Indiana and Warhol themselves; they exemplify the two extremes of pop—the brassy and the banal. Indiana's *Eat* and its companion painting, *Die,* both from 1962, are dazzling, diamond-shaped canvases with their colorful titles emblazoned across their girth, whereas Warhol's movie is monochromatic and monotonous. Shot at the end of 1963, his *Eat* shows Indiana in his loft on the slip eating a mushroom—for forty-five long minutes.

Although Indiana calls the film "pure poetry," he has his doubts about Warhol's mastery of the medium. "While we were shooting it," says Indiana, "his camera was falling apart, he was putting it back together with paper clips, and I was thinking, God, why are we wasting our time? I didn't think it was very professional. Of course, it was many reels, and he didn't put them back in the proper order, so the film is jumping about. . . . Real pro, real pro."

Just before he died in 1987, Warhol quipped that his early films are perhaps better talked about than seen. Indiana agrees. "Without a doubt," he says. "Except for *Blow Job.*"

THE WORDS IN INDIANA'S CANVASES made his work stand out from that of the other pop artists. They were also the cause of acrimony among his friends. "There was a prejudice against using words," he says. "Most people don't like to see words. In the Muslim world, mosques are decorated only with gorgeous arabesque words. But our culture has a block against this. . . . [Yet] I always considered myself a poet, and I always considered my art to be concrete poetry."

As Indiana's pop style became more pronounced, his statements became more blunt, and lines of poetry were reduced to simple exclamations. Experimenting with punchy three- and four-letter words stenciled onto wood sculptures and paintings, Indiana inevitably hit on the real thing: he drew a black-and-white schema for a painting called *Fuck.*

According to Indiana, the person most upset by his use of words in paintings had been Kelly. So Indiana showed him his draft for *Fuck.* Kelly was, Indiana says, "absolutely horrified. . . . He said that if I ever exhibited it he'd never speak to me again. I never exhibited it. But the damage was done."

"I don't remember it," counters Kelly. "I probably just said I didn't care for it. I'm not a confrontational artist. I don't like to rub people's faces in it. It's a little bit like overkill. He wanted to be controversial."

Indiana was chastened, so he toned down and dreamed up *Love.* Indeed, the evolution of this pivotal work suggests that *Love* is a watered-down version of the former. "There's no question," says Indiana now. "That's the reason for the tilted *O.* It's an erection."

In 1964, *Love* became the most popular Christmas card that the Museum of Modern Art had ever published. When he was invited to design the card, Indiana painted three studies, and they became the beginning of the end. "Having done three small paintings," Indiana claims, "I didn't go on doing *Love* paintings because of the success of the Christmas card. I simply did it because I liked the *Love* paintings and they got bigger and bigger and more and more and more and it never stopped. I'm still doing *Love.*"

After the card came the ring. In 1966, Indiana contracted a small firm called the Beautiful Bag and Box Company of Philadelphia to produce a hundred rings bearing his *Love* motif. These, says Indiana, quickly became the fashionable things for New York's richest ladies to wear. Then Indiana mounted an exhibition at Stable, an entire galleryful of *Love*. To promote the show, the gallery printed a *Love* poster and circulated it around town. Although the poster helped make the show a huge success, there was something missing from it that had an enormous effect on Indiana's future career—the copyright symbol.

"The rip-offs kept me from being a billionaire, although I would never have done those things anyway. But they soured the art world on the image of my *Love*."

Around the same time, a well-known poster company also published a poster, which Indiana says omitted the copyright notice. And within weeks, he says, the cat was out of the bag: "When the rip-off people discovered that there was a print I had been involved with that carried no copyright symbol, it killed my legitimacy as an artist.

"I sent off the necessary papers to the United States Copyright Office and was advised that a word cannot be copyrighted. I was ill-advised, [but] that was the advice I got, and I just became discouraged. I'm not litigious. I don't sue people. People who sue people are interested in money. Besides, I don't know who they all were.

"*Love* has since gone into a hundred different variations. You walk down the street these days and SALE is written SA on the top and LE on the bottom. But the really painful rip-off was *Love Story*." Indiana says that someone approached Erich Segal, author of the best-selling novel, and asked him if he felt any guilt about the similarity between the book jacket's design and Indiana's painting and Segal replied that the artist should feel honored.

According to art dealer Marian Goodman, whose Multiples company collaborated with Indiana on some of the artist's own editions, "There was really inadequate copyright for artists then—that came later. We tried to defend the copyright, but it couldn't be done because we were up against companies that were too big." Among them was a big cosmetics company that produced thousands of *Love* rings as a promotion.

"The rip-offs kept me from being a billionaire, although I would never have done those things anyway," says Indiana. "But they certainly soured the art world on the image of my *Love*. Only two museums ever acquired *Love* paintings, and I think that's immediately a result of people's just presuming that I had been responsible for all this junk that flooded the world."

Indiana's response was to be fruitful and multiply. With Multiples, he forged six twelve-inch, carved-aluminum *Love* sculptures (last year, one went for $35,000 at Christie's). For RCA, he authorized a *Love* record cover for Messiaen's *Turangalîla-Symphonie*. Then came a *Love* cross, a banner, a diptych, and a silk-screen edition in collaboration with Mass Originals, art collector Eugene Schwartz's company, in both a signed edition of one hundred and an unnumbered edition of thousands (which sold out at twenty dollars each). In 1970, Indiana made a twelve-foot, three-dimensional Cor-Ten steel version of *Love* that was sold to the Indianapolis Museum for $75,000. In 1972, he did an edition of six-foot polychrome *Love* sculptures. And in 1973 came the *Love* stamp, for which the U.S. Postal Service paid him an honorarium of $1,000.

As opposed to the rip-offs, he says, all of the above is art. "I don't call it junk. Nor do I call my original *Love* ring junk. It happens to be a very beautiful object. I still wear it."

STABLE GALLERY CLOSED IN 1966, AFter rival galleries had skimmed its cream. "They lost everybody," Indiana says. "Andy left. Marisol left. For six years I had no gallery." It was one of the things that finished off his career. "How marvelous it would be to have one important dealer in your life," he says wistfully. "This business in New York of the artists jumping from dealer to dealer I find absolutely repellent. That's one reason I stayed at the Stable Gallery too long. I, too, should have left. It was a sinking ship. But I didn't. I remained loyal until it just became impossible."

In 1972, he signed with the Paris dealer Denise René, who was opening a space in New York and wanted at least one American artist among her European ones. But that didn't last either. "Denise opened at a very bad time, when the recession began," says Indiana. "By 1978 she closed." By this time, Indiana was also losing his loft and had gone through a few lovers, notably the women's clothing designer John Kloss. What's more, the former pop artist's career was also on the skids. "Fashion comes and goes," he says, "and I was no longer invited to be in the Whitney Biennials. . . . I thought that having a show every six years, that scarcity and rarity, might possibly work to my advantage. It didn't." So in 1978 he packed up and moved permanently to his vacation home on the distant island of Vinalhaven, Maine.

VINALHAVEN ISLAND LIES IN THE FOG just out of reach of the prettiness of New England. The closest port is Rockland, and the nearest landmass to the east is France. The region is quintessential rural Maine. Robert Storr, a refugee from Maine who is now a curator of painting and sculpture at the Museum of Modern Art, calls it the Appalachians of the North.

Indiana hauled two trucks on twelve trips from New York to his new home. There were hundreds of canvases and prints and thirteen cats and dogs. His former Odd Fellows men's lodge is still undergoing restoration, and Indiana has been forced to sell his valuable Twomblys at Sotheby's to finance the repair work. Inside his creaky but comfortable château there is space for all of his art to be arranged according to period and media, as well as numerous studios and

studies, libraries and living rooms.

Here Indiana worked with a handful of assistants—young men from the island, part-time fishermen—building sculptures, reading, and mapping out new pictorial work. He even devised a four-person chessboard; while he was designing it, he paid his assistants ten dollars an hour to play with him. And he sometimes became so absorbed in his life on the island and in renovating the lodge that he forgot about New York, even refusing to answer the telephone. "New York left me," he explains. "I was already a nonperson. I never knocked on doors, and no dealer came to me."

Indiana slowly acquainted himself with the history of Vinalhaven and discovered that Marsden Hartley had once summered on the island. Near the end of his life, Hartley abandoned abstract art and occupied himself with landscapes, as well as with voyeuristic drawings of virile lobstermen sunning themselves on the beach and hunky, broad-shouldered versions of Cézanne's bathers.

Hartley had once cut a swath across Europe, from the salon of Gertrude Stein in Paris to militaristic, prewar Berlin. Most pertinent of all to Indiana's story is that Hartley had become deeply infatuated with a German officer who would be killed in the opening blasts of World War I. In 1914 and 1915, the painter expressed his heartbreak in his Berlin Series, nearly fifty paintings, all laden with symbolic military insignia, Iron Crosses, and flags painted in bold geometric patterns. As Indiana rightly recognized, they are imbued with the same heraldic spirit that characterizes his own work. With their boundless imagery of circles, triangles, checkerboards, zigzags, numbers, and letters, the original Hartleys could almost be Indianas.

Indiana was delighted to discover parallels between his life and work and Hartley's, and in 1989, he launched a new series of direct appropriations of Hartley's paintings, which he calls *The Hartley Elegies*. "They're a natural for me," he says with excitement. "They liberate me from the symmetry and strict formalism that I had been rather stuck in for some time."

At the same time, Indiana was inspired by Hartley's example to return to drawing from life. "I had for a long time wanted to bring the *Love* from the spiritual into the erotic," he says, and Hartley's work "suddenly spurred me to get back to drawing." While discussing one particular Hartley portrait, *Madawaska,* in which the male model is wearing nothing except a G-string, Indiana is enthusiastic: "I have always loved that painting because it was one of the first Hartleys that I ever experienced in person. I would love to redo that nude as an homage to Hartley and remove Mr. Hartley's inhibitions—and the G-string."

So began his drawings of phalluses. "And that," says Indiana, "is where the recent difficulties came from."

To be specific, Indiana's recent difficulties began a year ago—when Jason Marriner, one of the young men who worked for him, called the Rockland home of Detective Ernie McIntosh.

McIntosh, thirty-five, a father of three girls, was formerly the patrol deputy on Vinalhaven. According to Indiana, McIntosh "was the island cop, and he bears a grudge." In fact, the townspeople had petitioned to have McIntosh removed from the island two years earlier on the grounds that he enforced the law in an intimidating way.

Despite the petition (which was ultimately dropped), McIntosh denies holding a grudge against any of the locals, including Indiana. "I like Robert Indiana," he says. Yet he describes the island as "a vicious little town with rumors" and boasts that the petition against him was actually "a pat on the back." Indeed, upon leaving Vinalhaven, he was promoted to detective and placed in charge of child abuse.

In August, Marriner called McIntosh to ask him about "a friend of his" who had stolen some checks. Marriner wanted to know what the punishment would be if "his friend" was caught. In the course of their conversation, however, Marriner broke down and said that he was the one who had stolen the checks from his employer. He also said that for a number of years Indiana had paid him to pose nude and to "perform oral sex upon him."

As Marriner spoke, Indiana's bank was investigating him for allegedly stealing and forging almost $7,000 in checks. Indiana declares that he would not have brought charges against Marriner. "I have never brought charges against anyone," he says. "It's really the bank . . . and the state. If I had known that this young man had stolen the money . . . I wouldn't have done anything."

Nevertheless, Marriner may have gotten wind of the investigation from an unknown source and panicked. He called McIntosh and that's why, in an attempt to explain away his alleged thefts from Indiana, he spilled the beans.

As the detective untangled the twisted love story, he talked to another former Indiana model, John MacDonald, who corroborated the charges and also claimed that "during the posing of [a] nude drawing, Indiana stopped" and made similar advances. And as a result of the claims, Indiana's nude drawings were seized and are being held as evidence of prostitution.

The artist maintains that the prosecutors "have to prove their accusations, and as far as my lawyers are concerned, the drawings don't mean anything." He is nevertheless concerned that Maine is "a redneck state . . . a very homophobic state," so he has opted for a bench trial (in which he will be tried before a judge without a jury). The case against him is now set to be heard this summer.

Charged with four counts of theft, burglary, and forgery, James Marriner is also awaiting trial. In the meantime, he consigned for sale a number of prints that Indiana had given him. They appeared at auction at Christie's New York in May.

For Indiana, love goes on. He recently installed a huge *Love* sculpture outside the Monte Carlo casino, and the Marisa del Re Gallery, his new New York dealer, placed another *Love* sculpture in front of the Grand Palais for the duration of the Paris Art Fair. There's a renewed interest in Indiana's early work; dealers and collectors are quietly scouring personal collections for Indiana's gems. And *The Hartley Elegies* are being taken seriously.

Naturally, love is central to Indiana's Hartleys—brotherly love, the love of art, and mourning for lost love. "The only thing I'm worried about," says Indiana, casting his eyes heavenward, "is, what is Marsden thinking?" □

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female friends. "He was a wonderful connoisseur of women," declares New York art-gallery owner Leo Castelli, who grew up reading Moravia but met him only late in the novelist's life. Diane Von Furstenberg, who often entertained Moravia in Paris in recent years, coos, "He had women visiting him all the time." He was particularly fond of young women. As another friend observes, "He loved to be in their company." He frequently invited them out to movies, but as the friend adds, "not necessarily with any ulterior purpose."

Indeed, the extent of his involvement with the opposite sex was not always clear to even those closest to him. But one word that surfaces repeatedly when friends talk about Moravia is *voyeur*. (His 1985 book, touted on its dust jacket as "a novel of sexual obsession," is titled *The Voyeur*.) As Roger W. Straus, president and chief executive officer of Farrar, Straus & Giroux, his American publisher since the 1940s, explains: "He liked to watch the wheels go round. Now, you can interpret that as anything from watching people screwing to looking at two people down the street having coffee."

CARMEN'S LOOK AND LIBERTINE WAYS invite ready comparisons to the beautiful, free-spirited women who people Moravia's works. Some see hints of her type in the adventurous Carla in the author's first novel, *The Time of Indifference*. In it, Carla becomes the mistress of her mother's lover. The restless, young Carmen would prove ample inspiration for Moravia, whose stories explored the netherworlds of sex and detachment with an astronomer's eye.

Shades of the couple's sometimes tortured openness can be seen in the film version of *The Friday Villa,* a Moravia story published in the 1980s. It revolves around a man and a well-kept secret in his beachside community: his young spouse's weekend lover up the coast. "As far as their sex life is concerned, the husband's not much good," says a friend, illuminating the plot line. "He's jealous of her, but at the same time doesn't try to stop her." Jealousy, contend many who knew Alberto, was for him the very locus of love.

Moravia often used to say that Carmen liked power and men with power. "Not true at all," she responds earnestly. "I don't like powerful people in general, although I have liked certain powerful people. . . . What I do have to admit is that I like to wield my own power over others. . . . I am a monstrous individualist. I can't work up interest in others, and I can't be influenced by the men I am with. I am curious to discover their life, their friends—and then I grow bored."

To battle this demonic ennui, Carmen frequently takes to the road. "I love staying in a hotel," she gushes. "If I had enough money, I'd live in hotels all the time." And then, in her drop-of-a-hat manner, she springs into a self-styled mantra, reciting her dream hotels: the King David in Jerusalem, the Palace Hotel in Madrid, the Hotel Mamounia in Marrakesh, the Pera Palas Hotel in Istanbul. During the summer, Carmen frequently stays in Rome—a possible throwback to the annual six weeks of complete solitude she insisted upon, during which Alberto would stay at the Sabaudia beach house. While in Rome, she indulges her fascination with hotels by taking a lunchtime swim in the pool at the Cavalieri Hilton on Monte Mario.

The independent Carmen may not have been a willing muse but nonetheless fulfilled that role. During the time she lived with Alberto, he produced five novels, two collections of short stories, and several magazine and newspaper articles. His last novel, *The Leopard Woman,* a tale of two couples traveling together in Africa, will be published in Italy next month. Literarily speaking, it was a fertile time as well for Carmen, who wrote and published three novels of her own. Their shared life had its tempestuousness; they usually wouldn't fight in the presence of friends, but the tension surrounding one of their battles could be thicker than clotted cream. Von Furstenberg remembers "a lot of slammed phones."

It would be wrong to call Carmen choleric, but she does occasionally fly into a rage. I remember a great to-and-froing of wild quarrels and truces between Signor and Signora Moravia. Much of this occurred during my lunches with Alberto while working on the book. Sometimes Carmen wouldn't turn up because she was angry with Alberto. Even their closest friends were unable to decipher just what prompted these fissures, which at times appeared beyond repair. Yet like a rainbow after a violent storm, a tender reconciliation would submerge all the fury. Soon they would be holding hands fondly.

Despite the nagging whispers about Carmen's shirking responsibility, one of the author's bedside visitors recalls a "solicitous" Carmen keeping the household running after Moravia's car accident. And there were tableaux of keen affection. In the earlier days of their relationship, the couple could be seen going to the movies or out for another shared passion—ice cream. And there was an electric moment when Moravia discussed *The Voyeur* at Columbia University in the mid-1980s. The auditorium was packed, and the novelist answered questions in perfect English. Carmen, seated in the front row, watched him with an almost palpable admiration. She was obviously proud to be his wife. Yet, as one who was in attendance recalls, Carmen disappeared the instant Alberto had finished his talk, refusing, as was her wont, to attend the postlecture gathering with her husband.

"Our bond was exclusively private," intones Carmen. "I'm furious at Alberto's death. I miss his physical, living presence terribly—his hands, his abrupt gestures, his voice. It's often said that artists are immortal because their works remain after them. My relationship with my husband wasn't based on work. Our bond was intimate. We read each other's books like any ordinary reader—once they were published." Indeed, the couple's close friends concur that unlike many two-writer households, the Moravia apartment saw no give-and-take over early story drafts.

Whereas Carmen feels no compunction to defend her idiosyncratic attachment to Alberto, he was constantly coming to her defense. He would eagerly tell friends how much he was in love with her and that he worried about her. (Her eating habits can be maddening: her diet on the run consists of yogurt, ice cream, dried fruit, popcorn, and occasionally, salmon or chicken salad; her drink of choice is tea or champagne—in moderation.) His friends, though, especially those who'd known him well when he was with Elsa or Dacia, weren't so sympathetic to Carmen's nonchalance. They wondered why she

wasn't seen out with him in the evening more and why she didn't curtail her travels during his last days. Even holiday get-togethers—like a Thanksgiving dinner at Von Furstenberg's Paris apartment two years ago—would find Alberto showing up sans Carmen.

Moravia's acceptance of the aloof Carmen—and of the other women who filled his life with psychological speed traps—may have its roots in his earliest days. His mother was said to be remote, at best. Her impact may have been overarching—or merely overrated. Still, as Moravia's seminal work suggests, his just-out-of-reach female characters preceded the string of real-life women who would often prove equally elusive.

Motherhood, like so much else in Carmen's life, is tackled on her own terms. To her son, Hector, Carmen is more of a friend than a parent. He seems to have forgiven his mother for leaving him with his father as a child. Carmen makes no apologies for doing so, maintaining that she was too young to bear the responsibilities of parenthood. Today when he's on holiday from school in America, Hector spends a good deal of his time with Carmen.

But where mother and son have been able to fashion an amicable relationship, stepfather and stepson never could. Nor did either appear to have the inclination. (Some say Hector was shy; others contend his scant Italian kept him quiet, although at least one family friend believes he had a far greater command of the language than he let on.) The author's books, after all, were stand-in children. As for the real thing, Von Furstenberg insists, "He just never seemed to care to have any." And in *Vita di Moravia,* Moravia observes: "I think that literature must believe itself to be a surrogate for everything else."

CARMEN AND OTHERS WHO WERE close to Alberto believe that in his final years he had become even more handsome than in his prime. So strong were his feelings toward Carmen that her inability to see him as an ailing old man imbued him with a drive to overcome—to whatever extent possible—life's timetable. It was the same fighting spirit he'd displayed as a teenager, when tuberculosis forced him to spend two years in sanatoriums. He fought back by studying French and English, reading Shakespeare, and writing. (One of his short stories from his confinement is tellingly titled "A Sick Boy's Winter.") The illness left him with a slight limp that never detracted from the youthful aura he radiated. One afternoon a few years ago Moravia confided to me: "These last ten years seem to me a dream. You realize I'm eighty years old, and yet I'm like a student, a boy!"

Moravia's sense of omnipotence was always renewed in Paris, a city he favored in many ways over his beloved Rome. He used to describe Paris and Moscow as "spiritual cities," because he could sense the revolutions that had taken place there. But more important, he was accorded a respect in France different from that of its Italian counterpart. In Italy he was a star; in France, a writer. As he entered his eighties, Paris had become a second home. At Von Furstenberg's Left Bank apartment, the designer and her friends still refer to the bedroom in which the author stayed as "Moravia's room."

In the perfunctory tone of the recently widowed, Carmen insists that she will never remarry. She, after all, considers herself part of an "unlucky generation," one whose men she believes are mostly helpless, rude, and drained of vitality. If she has any consorts, the enterprising Italian press has yet to get wind of it. That may be in part because she spent almost as much time last year in Jerusalem as in Rome. "Jerusalem is a bit like a malediction," she contends. "It's got into my blood." Israeli friends are sometimes miffed by Carmen's fraternizing with Palestinians, an academic matter for someone who has always considered herself a citizen of the world. Her circle of friends includes such politicians as Bettino Craxi, head of Italy's Socialist party; artists like the painters Matthew and Maro Spender, whose house near Siena is one of Carmen's favorite getaways; and she remains close to Alberto's sisters.

Although she'll continue writing, Carmen can thank her prolific deceased husband for the sort of financial security that would be the envy of any artist. Her avowed indulgences—"Sunglasses, watches, and fountain pens are the only things I keep"—won't have to be curtailed anytime soon.

Among her most enduring possessions will be the memories of a decade with a genius—a writer who more than once, says a publishing source, was short-listed for the Nobel prize. "He was a man who believed in living as a couple, and he loved me," says a proud Carmen. "It's largely thanks to him that we remained together for ten years. Alberto was not a teacher for me; he wasn't protective or paternal. Between us there was a total complicity. The moment he woke up in the morning, Alberto came straight to my room to see if I was still in bed. He wrote me many letters and slipped them under my door. At times we were very happy, because I knew how to make him happy." Her formula seemed to come down to exercising the very independence Alberto craved in his lovers. It mattered little to the giant of Italian letters how much of his own resources might be tapped in that process.

Alberto was captivated by Carmen's nonconformity. She loved him, indeed, but with a certain asperity, reminding him at every moment that for her, he was simply a man—not a famous writer, a star. She provided him with the sharp counterpoint to fame without which some artists simply perish. Carmen could never have tolerated anything other than being herself. Nor could Alberto have tolerated her any other way.

What Carmen appreciated most in the author, she says unabashedly, was "his immense courage to love me. He loved me for what I was, even if he suffered. But he accepted me. He was the least bourgeois person I have ever known. He attached great importance to the affective life. Actually he was a man of touching ingenuousness and vitality. Since his death, I haven't really been sad; I feel only a great anger because of the lack of his body. I've decided I will never go back to the cemetery."

Some say that toward the end, when Alberto was walking less and less, Carmen simply couldn't cope with the unavoidable ravages of time. She makes no secret of her disdain for aging. "My real worry is what I'll do after I'm fifty," she volunteers. "I can't imagine myself any different from the way I am, and I don't know if I'll be able to live as an old person." If Alberto accepted Carmen's escapist attitude toward mortality, he nonetheless dreaded a long illness, because he feared his wife would not nurse him. Fate responded generously to them both. □

VAULT GESTALT

(Continued from page 62)

Thus, for all-around protection, the average citizen is expected to put his or her valuables inside a small tamper-resistant strongbox made of hardened steel, then anchor that strongbox inside a fire-resistant safe. This chest-within-a-safe approach works beautifully for jewelry, a small set of family silver, or other objects no larger than, say, a copy of the yellow pages. For a small van Gogh, it might be a problem.

For serious collectors determined to store their treasures at home, then, the solution is to acquire an extraordinary safe (or vault, if you will), such as the 3,500-pound ISM Diamond Vault, imported from Israel. Rated for both fire and burglary (unlike lesser products), it is the size of a hefty refrigerator and has a metal-alloy body cast in one piece, so there are no welds for a thief to attack. As soon as it senses the violent jarring of an attempted break-in, it automatically triggers a set of heavy spring-loaded bolts to slide shut and freeze the door in place. Boston Lock sells this particular vault for $8,000 and up.

Several much-publicized art thefts heightened the interest in safes and vaults, but so did the dramatic price increases for art and other collectibles during the 1980s boom.

For a freestanding safe to be approved by Underwriter's Laboratories (UL) as even briefly burglar-resistant, it must weigh an absolute minimum of 750 pounds. "Otherwise," points out Bob Rosberg, "the burglar just comes in and wheels it out the door."

Clearly, a high-security safe is not something you pick up at the local hardware store and load into the back of your station wagon. In fact, the best time to acquire one is before your house is built, because even a so-called portable vault can weigh two tons, and its passage through a standard doorway is virtually impossible.

If you're an art collector shopping for an in-home safe or vault, first you need to determine how large a unit to buy. Separate the objects you plan to store. Some specialists recommend having them crated professionally, as if you were shipping them. Then stack the crates and measure the size of the pile.

Before packing everything up, however, call in an appraiser to assess the collection's current worth. If you choose not to reveal the value of what you plan to store to your safe dealer or security consultant, you'll likely be sold the wrong safe. There's no magic equation between a safe's sturdiness and the value of its contents, of course, but a thief is apt to make a greater effort to get at a Rembrandt than at your grandmother's engagement ring.

"The first thing I say to a customer is, 'Tell me the truth now,' " stresses Harry Stoia. The customer may claim that the future contents of a safe are worth $500, for instance. "Then the little beads of perspiration appear on his brow. If he then says ten thousand dollars, I still double or triple the figure. We know customers aren't going to tell us the truth." Contemporary paranoia apparently extends to a mistrust of the security industry itself.

The amount you should spend will depend largely on the value and size of the possessions in question. As a rule of thumb, if what you're storing is appraised at more than $25,000, you should buy a safe with a UL rating of at least TL-15, and you should expect to pay $1,000 or more, depending on its capacity.

For artwork worth more than $100,000, you'll want a commercial-quality, burglar-resistant vault. The smallest of these start at roughly $7,000, and prices rise rapidly with size.

If you need more space than a portable vault can provide, consider a class-M or class-1 bank-style vault and door, the arrangement of choice for many collectors. Expect to pay $15,000 to $25,000 for a class-M vault, depending on size and extras, and even more for a class-1.

"If you bug [add an alarm to] a class-1 vault," says Red Deluse, a vice president of Hamilton Safe, "it will give you security as good as you could need or want. I wouldn't hesitate to put a very valuable painting in it."

For the major collector for whom price is not the deciding factor, the ace of vaults is a poured-in-place, concrete-and-steel, climate-controlled, walk-in strong room with a bank-style vault door. For $30,000 to $40,000, depending on extras, Boston Lock will sell you a nine- by twelve-foot vault rated for both burglary and fire. The cost could run as high as $100,000, depending on where the vault is installed. If that's not big enough, it offers a larger, modular vault room manufactured by Hamilton Safe—you pick the size—for $50,000, $75,000, or $100,000.

The base price of your safe or vault may or may not include certain extras. A time lock, the thief's nemesis, can be added to most vault doors. "Before you go away on a two-month vacation," says Harry Stoia, "you type in the date you'll get back, which is the next time anyone can get into the vault."

Better vault doors include their own ventilation systems, a must for delicate media like etchings, lithographs, or any works on paper. Still, when buyers insist on ventilation, they may have more than the welfare of their valuables in mind.

"A lot of people want ventilation inside a vault in case they lock themselves in by accident," says Stoia. "Or maybe someone else locks them in."

Climate control in a top-of-the-line vault includes electronic sensors that detect water seepage from surrounding soil. Safes and vaults are frequently in basements, where moisture can be a problem. They should be opened periodically and aired out. Moisture wouldn't matter if you were just storing bullion, but it certainly isn't good for etchings or watercolors.

Peripheral systems—alarms, sensors, and for the big-time collector, remote

cameras and guards patrolling around-the-clock—are essential aspects of any security arrangement.

Fortunately or unfortunately, most police stations no longer accept direct alarm hookups from private homes; there were simply too many false alarms. Instead, alarms are best routed to a reputable private security firm such as ADT Security Systems, which is headquartered in Parsippany, New Jersey, and has nearly one hundred offices nationwide.

If industry experts take a skeptical view of even the best security arrangements, that's because they have seen what they are up against. Some methods used to breach a vault's walls are impressive indeed: diamond-and-tungsten drills, acetylene torches, oxygen tanks, and on rare occasions, something called a burning bar. This is a cast-iron pipe attached to an oxygen tank and filled with steel rods that, when set afire, produces a 6,000-degree flame. "You put it against a vault," says Bob Rosberg, "and it turns eighteen inches of reinforced concrete into butter."

Criminals have even signed up for correspondence courses in locksmithing in order to procure manuals for various safe models (the manuals are often included in the course materials). "They look in their little book, and it tells them the drilling points," explains Sal Schillizzi, owner of All-Over Locksmiths, on Manhattan's Upper East Side. That's why Schillizzi sells safes with their brand names removed.

Thieves have been known to back a tow truck up to the sliding glass doors of an empty home's den, wrap chains around the full-size safe inside, and tow the whole thing away. Another age-old trick is simply to peek when the owner dials the combination. Thieves have been known to train a telescope on a safe from outside a window—all the better to read the numbers.

Sometimes, however, lawbreakers don't have to work even that hard. Many safe owners are as lazy as the rest of us, it seems, and they only half lock their safes with a partial turn of the dial. As a result, a perpetrator can try moving the dial of the combination lock one number at a time, pausing after each move to pull the handle. The technique is so common it has a name: creeping.

Perhaps most inexcusable are people who don't bother to have a new combination set when they buy a safe; they settle for the factory-calibrated combination, which may be the same for all that company's models. And in some cases, that factory setting is a single number. "We're talking tremendous naïveté here," observes Joe Bartholomew, vice president of Boston Lock.

Over the years Boston Lock has sold vault hardware to the Isabella Stuart Gardner Museum in Boston. That was of little relevance, however, when, one night in 1990, college-age guards at the museum obediently opened the doors to a pair of ersatz police officers asking if they could "just use the phone" to report an emergency. Good-bye Rembrandts, good-bye Vermeer.

In the art world, however, theft is a much lesser threat than smoke and fire are, says Charles Biada, a retired New York City Police Department crime-prevention expert who specialized in museum and archive security.

"The worst thing is having fire fighters come in pushing high-pressure water through a hose," he points out. "It's going to blast apart anything in its path."

Steam is an additional problem. "In a fire, steam fills the cabinet and keeps the temperature below three hundred and fifty degrees for up to two hours," explains Richard Krasilovsky of New York's Empire Safes. "Although the steam won't hurt a pile of cash, it can ruin photographs, paintings, or prints."

Starting at approximately $300, Empire sells "media inserts," small boxes in which artwork can be placed and then put inside an existing safe. While a fire rages outside, the contents of the smaller box will stay comfortably cool (below 150 degrees) and dry (less than 80 percent humidity).

"There aren't any easy solutions," Mosler's Bob Rosberg admits. For the supercollector, installing a well-built, well-guarded "Fort Knox–type" vault in one's home is always going to be complicated, expensive, and imperfect. "And by the way," he adds, "we built Fort Knox." (The U.S. Treasury Department will neither confirm nor deny that Mosler was the contractor for the 1936 construction of the depository.)

On a smaller scale, one solution that normally isn't a good idea for at-home storage is an antique safe. Locksmiths routinely get calls from people who have bought or inherited the antiques and want the locks and hinges reconditioned. Don't bother, advise most experts, unless you plan to store candy and cigarettes inside.

"Antique safes tend to be big and bulky, they stress out floors, and they don't store that much. They may look great, but they don't have the strength that they appear to have," says Joe Bartholomew.

Actually, with their delicate gold leafing, scrollwork, and fleurs-de-lis, along with their undeniable cast-iron majesty, some antique safes can be works of art in themselves. Sal Schillizzi recalls the tale of a man who bought one at a flea market for seventy-five dollars many years ago. The buyer was a New York art collector, and he had been drawn to the landscape painting that adorned the safe's exterior.

Within a few years, the landscape artist's work had skyrocketed in value. "The safe was eventually appraised at a quarter of a million dollars," says Schillizzi. It is now worth far more than any cash, document, or jewelry it ever protected. □

"We just shipped a bank-type vault to an individual in Montana," says one of the most prestigious manufacturers of safes. "He calls it a wine cellar, but you and I both know he's got gold in there."

Valuations

GETTING YOUR MASTERS

Even in bad times, old master paintings are always smart investments. Although this year's Rembrandt may be next year's misattribution, these distinguished European works have centuries of good reviews on their side.

by Jerry Patterson

TRUE BELIEVERS IN OLD MASTERS MUST BE REJOICING—among them industrialist Norton Simon, financier Saul Steinberg, and oil heir Frederick Koch. In today's shaky art market, their favorites are more than holding their own.

Since late spring 1990, when the first premonitions of the end of the great art boom of the late eighties were felt, old master paintings have outperformed the other major fields at auctions and in galleries. At the least, their failure rate has been considerably lower. Roughly 30 percent of old masters brought to auction have failed to sell. That figure may sound high, until you realize that recently 40 to 50 percent of the Impressionists put on the block have gone unsold and the percentages of unsold nineteenth-century and American art have been even higher.

An old master, very roughly defined, is a painting executed by a European artist between the thirteenth and the early nineteenth centuries. The cutoff date is, however, highly flexible. At auctions and exhibitions of these works, you see paintings by such artists as Eugène Delacroix (died 1863), J. M. W. Turner (died 1851), and even Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot (died 1875). The category includes not only the obvious names—Leonardo, Michelangelo, Titian, and Raphael—but also artists such as Boucher, Canaletto, and Gainsborough. It is the time frame, not the greatness of the artist, that defines old masters.

Prices of old masters are not soaring, but paintings are changing hands, which is more than can be said for other categories, where sales are sluggish, to say the least. There is really nothing surprising about all this. Buyers have a long history of turning back to the old masters during hard times in the art market. Perhaps there is reassurance in objects that have been sought after and cherished by collectors not for decades but for centuries. They are always there; you just don't notice them when the prices for Renoir and van Gogh and Picasso are in the stratosphere.

That was demonstrably the case during the past decade. Old masters never reached the top of the market, but the top was sky-high; last year, van Gogh's *Portrait of Dr. Gachet* sold for $82.5 million, and Renoir's *Au Moulin de la Galette* brought $78.1 million. Of the three hundred paintings that fetched the highest prices at auction between 1980 and the end of 1990, only thirty-one were old masters. And only one of them was among the top ten for which record prices were paid: *Portrait of Cosimo I de' Medici,* by Jacopo Carucci, known as Pontormo, sold in 1989 for $35.2 million.

Because the old master category covers such a wide range of work, it is necessary to pinpoint the appeal of individual works. Elaine Banks, head of the paintings department at the William Doyle Galleries in New York City, believes the "master" is far more important to buyers than the "old."

"The aesthetic definitely outweighs the historical aspect for most buyers," says Banks. "Collectors of seventeenth-century Dutch paintings, for example, love the church interiors by Pieter Jansz Saenredam [1597–1665]. It isn't so much that they often depict churches still standing. It's the serenity and simplicity of the paintings."

There have been some remarkable recent successes: *The Martyrdom of St. Bartholomew,* by Jusepe de Ribera (Spanish, 1588–1656), which had been bought in 1983 for $1 million, was sold in 1990 for nearly five times as much: $4,950,000.

The Lock, by John Constable (British, 1776–1837), was bought by Swiss art collector Baron Heinrich Thyssen-Bornemisza in fall 1990 (when the art market had already taken a tumble) for $21,560,000, becoming the most expensive painting by a British artist ever sold. It also brought the highest price of any painting sold at auction worldwide during the fall season, an unusual distinction for an old master. *Les Tricheurs* (The Cheats), by Valentin de Boulogne (French, 1591–1632), was sold in Paris in 1989 for $4.2 million, the costliest old master ever bought at auction in France.

Off the auction block, Axa, the French insurance giant, paid approximately $12 million last year for the *Portrait of Alfonso d'Avalos,* by Titian, from the celebrated collection of Martine Comtesse de Béhague. A drawing of drapery by Leonardo from that same collection was sold at auction in Monaco to Johnson and Johnson heiress Barbara Piasecka Johnson for $5.7 million.

American private collectors of old masters are relatively rare. European private collectors—especially the Italians, Germans, and Dutch—and both European and American museums constitute the bedrock of old master collecting.

An inscrutable allegorical painting by Dosso Dossi (ca. 1530, oil on canvas, 70½" x 85½") sold for $4.07 million at Christie's New York in 1989.

Perhaps that's because the iconography and topography of the old masters are much more familiar to Europeans than to Americans. We tend to be put off by the religious imagery (the martyrdom of Saint Agnes, for instance, a subject treated by scores of artists), obscure mythology (such as the repeatedly reattributed *Acis and Galatea Discovered by Polyphemus*), and elaborate allegories that are the subjects of so many old master paintings.

Prominent among the American exceptions to this attitude are academics and curators, who revel in exegesis. Still, even the most learned are baffled at times. This was the case with an enormous, newly discovered painting by Giovanni de Lutero, called Dosso Dossi (Italian, 1479–1542), which sold at auction in New York in 1989. It was an allegory, but of what, no one could determine.

"The subject . . . has eluded precise identification," admitted the Christie's catalog. The work had to be described rather lamely as "an allegory of the uncertainty of human existence." It brought a record for the artist of more than $4 million, nevertheless.

Japanese collectors seem to be unaware of the existence of old master paintings. (This is something of an advantage to

the collector, because the category's prices have not been driven up by that country's buyers.) Even during the late eighties, when the Japanese swept through salesrooms and auction galleries, their presence in the old master sector was undetectable. This lack of interest is generally ascribed, not entirely convincingly, to Japanese culture's lack of familiarity with the Christian and mythological allusions in the works. Yet the Japanese are the major buyers of Impressionists of the belle epoque, surely just as unfamiliar a milieu.

A more likely reason for their coolness is most Japanese collectors' preference for the easily recognizable. A Renoir identifiable as a Renoir at a thousand paces is their ideal. They buy well-known names, and very few available old masters fit that bill.

Of course, closer to home, the old masters have had their share of troubles. At the major international auctions during the past year, there were significant disappointments.

Hare Among Plants with Robin, Lizards, and Insects, by the sixteenth-century German painter Hans Hoffmann (died 1591), whose works are rare on the market, sold for $594,200 in 1983 but failed to sell in July 1990. It was "bought in" at $1.2 million—that is, it did not reach the consignor's minimum price.

The noble *Portrait of General Monckton,* by Benjamin West (British-American, 1738–1820), offered by Monckton's descendants in November 1990, went unsold at a top bid of $1.8 million. Because this painting was expected to have great appeal for both British and American collectors, it had been estimated to bring up to $2.8 million.

Valentin de Boulogne's *Les Tricheurs* (ca. 1625, oil on canvas, 47⅛" x 59¼"), the most expensive old master painting ever sold at auction in France, brought $4.2 million in 1989.

Samuel Anointing David, by Mattia Preti (Italian, 1613–1699), belonged to David Paul, chairman of the troubled CenTrust bank of Miami, who had bought it for $1.15 million in 1989. A year later, when Florida banking officials ordered that it be sold, it brought only $594,000.

In May 1990, catastrophe befell the first major Rembrandt painting offered in several years. *St. Peter in Prison,* dating from 1631, was estimated to sell for $10 million to $15 million, but it was withdrawn when bidding at Christie's New York stalled at $9 million. The explanation is simple. A Miami real estate developer had bought it two years earlier, and the art trade believed he had offered it privately to a number of collectors and dealers. The old master trade dislikes paintings that have been shown to too many prospective buyers.

Shopping for old masters at galleries is always an alternative to the auction scene. You'll have more time to make your selection, and dealers will often keep their eyes open for specific items for you. You may even be able to arrange payment over a period of time, which often is not an option at the auction houses.

Wherever you choose to make your purchases, the central issue of collecting old masters is attribution, and there are a number of reasons that this is so. Many paintings were simply never signed. Others have lost the signature (sometimes cut off when framed, because the subject was considered more important than the artist). Still others bear spurious signatures. Titles have been lost, subjects forgotten, and innumerable copies made—some by the artist, some by his followers, some by copyists years later.

Scholars delight in these problems; to outsiders, it sometimes seems as though academicians take a perverse pleasure in overturning the attributions of their predecessors. There is always a new generation of art historians eager to squash the opinions of their elders.

The press has familiarized us with shifts in attribution of works by the biggest names. There were "Rembrandts" rejected by the Rembrandt Research Project in the Netherlands, for instance. That organization has, in the last few years, shaken many great museums by casting suspicious eyes on their Rembrandts, even on such beloved works as *The Polish Rider* in New York City's Frick Collection.

But changes of attribution affect even quite minor old masters. *Acis and Galatea Discovered by Polyphemus* is now ascribed to Jean-Francois de Troy (French, 1679–1752), but it was sold in 1956 as by Jean-Baptiste Lemoyne and in 1978 as by François Lemoine.

To protect themselves, auction houses have prepared a schedule of attribution. This glossary appears in all old master catalogs and is required reading for prospective buyers.

Attributions range from a flat ascription of a work to a named artist (the highest degree of authenticity) down through "attributed to" (probably by the artist), "studio of" (by an unknown hand or hands in the studio of the artist), "circle of" (an unidentified but distinct hand closely associated with the named artist), "style of" or "follower of" the artist (exactly that), "manner of" (in the style of the artist but painted at another date), and "after" (meaning a copy, the lowest degree of cataloging). The auction houses' general conditions of sale further protect them from claims based on misattribution.

COURTESY ARCOLE, PARIS

Many old masters are sold at auctions of other categories. Decorative paintings, generally (but not always) meaning those of lesser value, are included in furniture sales or sold "on premises" at estate sales. Traditionally, this is where the finds have been made: that is, paintings that have been misattributed downward and are much more valuable than their cataloging indicates. It is definitely worth the effort to scout these events, but be aware that others will be doing the same.

Paintings at these sales, and even at important sales, are likely to be grimy and "uncleaned," but as far as old masters go, that is anything but a drawback. If a work is uncleaned, that generally means it is fresh to the market. However, forgers know this too: fakes have often been deliberately dirtied to cast an aura of authenticity. European buyers are especially attracted to paintings that are dirty and unrestored, another way in which they differ from American collectors, who tend to prefer theirs brighter. Overcleaning is a great hazard to older paintings. Some authorities believe that paintings can be cleaned only twice during their existence without a significant loss in the original quality.

Condition, of course, is of major significance in old master collecting. Some pictures are so old and tattered that they can only be described as "noble ruins." Others have been so frequently cleaned and restored that the artist's original work is obscured to the point of extinction. At presale exhibitions of old masters, the black light—which the auction houses make available during viewings to reveal repairs and repainting not visible to the naked eye—is much in demand. And common is the viewers' habit of moistening their fingers and rubbing the painting to see just how much grime and varnish layer it. "We never sell an old master that hasn't been spat on," one auction-house expert laments.

Matters of condition are, however, meat and drink to old master collectors, a large band, more conspicuous in slack times like the present, but always eagerly seeking masterworks. They make the old masters a permanent market. □

Garnering $35.2 million at Christie's New York in 1989, Pontormo's *Portrait of Cosimo I de' Medici* (1537; oil on panel, transferred to canvas; 36¼" x 28⅜") was the only old master work on the list of the ten highest-priced paintings sold during the 1980s.

AFFORDABLE GREATNESS

You don't have to spend millions to assemble a collection of old master paintings. One of the field's strengths is the wide availability of modestly priced works. Both Sotheby's New York and Christie's New York hold old masters auctions: Sotheby's in January, April, May or June, and October; Christie's in January, May, and October. If you prefer to do your shopping at galleries, Wildenstein and Colnaghi, both of which are located in New York and in London, specialize in old masters. Here are ten attractive examples that were sold at auction in New York last spring for less than $25,000 each.

- ***Cristofano Allori (Italian, 1577–1621)*, Portrait of a Knight of the Order of Santo Stefano, *$19,800.***
- ***Nicolaes Berchem (Dutch, 1620–83)*, A Herdsman and Washerwoman Conversing by a Stream, *$12,100.***
- ***Teodor van Loon (Dutch, 1585–1667)*, The Crucifixion with Saints, *$13,200.***
- ***Nicolaes Maes (Dutch, 1632–93)*, Portrait of a Young Girl in Blue Holding a Rose and Leading a Lamb, *$6,050.***
- ***Sir Henry Raeburn (British, 1756–1823)*, Portrait of Dr. Alexander Lindsay of Pinkieburn, *$16,500.***
- ***Isaac Sailmaker (British, ca. 1633–1721)*, A View of Greenwich from the Thames, the Royal Observatory in the Distance, *$22,000.***
- ***Manner of (After) Tiziano Vecelli, called Titian (Italian, 1488–1576)*, Diana and Actaeon, *a copy painted circa 1556–59, $14,300.***
- ***Unknown (Hispano-Flemish, ca. 1500s)*, Saint Ildefonsus Receiving the Cope from the Virgin and Attendant Angels, the Road to Calvary, and the Scourged Christ, *a triptych, $12,100.***
- ***Gerrit van Vucht (Dutch, active 1658–97)*, A Basket, Kitchen Utensil, Salmon on a Plate . . . and Other Objects on a Ledge *(formerly attributed to Floris van Schooten), $11,000.***
- ***Richard Wilson (British, 1714–82)*, Landscape with the Tomb of the Horatii and the Curiatti, the Ruins of the Villa of Maecenas Beyond, *$22,000.***

VINTAGE VUITTON

There's no such thing as unnecessary baggage to collectors of Louis Vuitton luggage, who scour flea markets around the world for these splendid remnants of a gilded age of travel.

by Andrea DiNoto

AROUND 1910, A FRENCH TRAVELER ASKED THE VENERABLE Paris luggage firm, Louis Vuitton, if it could make a collapsible tilbury (a light two-wheeled, two-person carriage) for her to take to Persia, where, she feared, travel might be primitive. *Pas de problème.* Vuitton, accustomed to filling unusual special orders—from pullout trunk beds for explorers to tea cases for maharajas—easily produced three red, wood-staved trunks and a canvas duffel bag into which the dismantled tilbury neatly fit—minus the wheels, for which dustcovers were provided. Details of the lady's Persian sojourn are unknown; however, the tilbury survived the junket intact and remains perfectly preserved in a private collection in France.

Although the tilbury remains a pièce de résistance, unique in the company's 137-year history, today's collectors of vintage Vuitton seek and find dozens of custom-made cases and trunks that evoke the luxury and romance of the golden age of travel—the late nineteenth to mid-twentieth centuries. Paris-based antique-luggage dealer and collector Annette Agace De Castro explains: "These people are fascinated with the myth of Vuitton—luggage maker to the aristocracy—and with an era they never knew."

The "Vuitton era" began, in fact, with the company's founding in 1854, when horse-drawn carriages were still the primary mode of transportation. For centuries, trunks and boxes had been piled up and strapped on for bumpy journeys on rutted roads. All this changed in the late nineteenth century with the advent of steam-driven trains, and later of ocean liners that functioned as unimaginably luxurious hotels. As a purveyor of beautifully designed, solidly constructed luggage, Vuitton adapted to the times, providing well-heeled travelers—whether ticketed on the Orient Express or the *Normandie*—with elegant cases for their expensive wardrobes and worldly goods.

In the recently published, lavishly illustrated *The Golden Age of Travel,* author Alexis Gregory recounts that turn-of-the-century "gilded American travelers" bound for the London season packed giant steamer trunks "for the endless balls, country weekends, the Royal Ascot and the Henley, parading in Europe's resorts, and even, possibly, for presentation at court." To be sure, commodious, silk-lined Vuitton luggage signaled good taste and hence boasted irreproachable cachet. It was also valued for its locks, virtually pickproof owing to a complex, patented tumbler system. When the age of steamship voyages ended with the outbreak of World War II, trunks became nostalgic artifacts of a less hurried time. Says De Castro, "Collectors now travel with a trunk in their minds."

The company's founder, Louis Vuitton, began his career humbly, as a boy apprentice to a Parisian trunk maker whose specialty was dress-packing, that is, packing the elaborate bustled, crinolined, and hoop-skirted dresses of wealthy aristocrats. By the time Louis was thirty, he was not only an accomplished trunk maker but also the exclusive dress packer for no less a personage than the Empress Eugénie. In 1854, confident of his skills, and equipped with impeccable social connections (including a close friendship with couturier Charles Worth), he set up his own shop in Paris devoted to "traveling requisites." Vuitton's rare stagecoach-era products, such as brass-studded, domed leather trunks, designed to allow rain to run off easily, are favorites with collectors. With the advent of railway travel, this style was superseded by the flat-topped, stackable trunk, a Vuitton innovation.

Although cases were produced in zinc, leather, straw, and crocodile, one of the earliest and most visionary designs used a waterproof gray varnished canvas (*gris Trianon*) instead of leather coverings. The canvas was varied with stripes, checks, and finally, in 1896, with the familiar LV-monogram pattern. It was hoped that the stylized flower-and-star—a sort of modernized fleur-de-lis—would thwart imitators of the company's striped and checkered trunk fabrics. But to little avail. Although the new pattern was promptly patented, it was widely copied, having almost immediately become one of the first international brand-name status symbols. (It was varied only once, in the twenties or thirties, says De Castro, in a black-on-black version called Vuittonite that was made for a group of White Russian aristocrats exiled in Paris.) The LV pattern continues to be widely faked, especially on handbags and small accessories—testament to the powerful identification of Vuitton with luxury goods. For several decades, the pattern was hand-stenciled, a process that produced slight irregularities and thus provides collectors with a clue to dating. By the fifties, the pattern was mechanically printed, marking the end of an era. However, the styling of the hard luggage—with hand-applied brass corners and fittings—has remained remarkably consistent.

Vuitton's sturdy, stylish luggage—every piece signed and numbered, every lock and key assigned to a specific customer and logged in the company archives—went, and still goes, everywhere, bearing the initials not only of the rich and famous but also of the intrepid and even bookish. Pierre Savorgnan de Brazza, who explored the Congo in the nineteenth centu-

Lady's cosmetic case (ca. 1921), produced when the LV insignia was hand-stenciled.

PHOTOGRAPHED EXCLUSIVELY FOR CONNOISSEUR BY ROBERT BUTLER; *LEFT,* COURTESY GEORGE HEARN COLLECTION; *RIGHT,* COURTESY STEPHEN GONZALEZ COLLECTION

efore the laptop, there was this thirty-
x-inch-high secretaire (ca. 1910–15).
e owner's identity is unknown, but
P.L. (initials on lower left) apparently
ed to work or write letters while traveling.

ry, slept in remotest Africa in an ingeniously designed Vuitton trunk bed that held a hair mattress, two blankets, and four sheets. The legendary soprano Lily Pons traveled with a set of Vuitton steamer trunks, one of which held thirty-six pairs of her tiny shoes. Normally, shoe trunks were designed to hold only thirty pairs—considered a reasonable amount during the great age of steamship travel, when numerous daily costume changes were de rigueur. Multiple wardrobe changes would have proved no challenge for the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, who between them carried thirty-odd pieces of Vuitton.

Vuitton routinely outfitted touring cars with tool boxes and camping equipment that sometimes included a *sac chauffeur,* which protected the spare wheel from rain and could also be used as a tub. Trunks were tailored to fit everywhere—whether in an aerial balloon or on a bicycle—and to hold everything and anything—not just basics like toiletries, jewels, and liquor but also wireless sets, ukuleles, firearms, Dictaphones, typewriters, phonograph records, and small libraries. A casual reader could have traveled with a few choice volumes built into a neat little Vuitton "bookcase," its fold-down front serving as a laptop desk, whereas a data-obsessed bibliophile might insist on toting his complete set of the *Encyclopædia Britannica,* for which at least one felt-lined Vuitton trunk is known to have been created.

Tracking down vintage Vuitton in every possible form and variation is the consuming passion of collector Stephen Gonzalez, whose Springfield, Massachusetts, house is occupied by more than thirty trunks ("It's been so bad, sometimes you had to walk sideways down the hall") and a pet pug, who strangely enough is not named Louis. When Gonzalez refers to "Louis," he means the Vuitton company and its products, for which he holds a deep and abiding fondness. So well known is his obsession that his friends once presented him with a chocolate birthday cake in the form of a miniature Vuitton trunk.

Gonzalez, like many other Vuitton collectors, is smitten with the well-worn look and feel of vintage Louis. Many seek the pre-1896 striped and checkered canvases, says De Castro, noting that they are rare but available. Also desirable are pieces dating from about 1910 to 1940 (the most collectible period), many bearing the initials of former owners, travel stickers, or both. Gonzalez owns a suitcase marked "G.O.K.," for Georgia O'Keeffe, and a library box—with space for books and files—once owned by the poet Archibald MacLeish. Most pieces, though, are of unknown origin, provoking Gonzalez to fantasize about who might have owned them and where they may have gone. Has he ever been to France, to visit the Vuitton store, factory, and museum, or to shop for Louis at the Paris flea markets? "No," says Gonzalez, chagrined. "I have fear of flying."

Vuitton made this tilbury about 1910 for a customer who planned to visit Persia and was concerned about local transportation.

Nevertheless, he has no trouble finding Vuitton items close to home, at flea markets, antiques shows, and auctions, and from people who answer his "wanted to buy" ads in antiques publications. He will go to great lengths to obtain a desirable trunk and once even rendezvoused with an unknown seller at midnight at a rest stop on the Massachusetts Turnpike.

The powerful appeal of the baggage, says Gonzalez, is in its craftsmanship. "I fell in love with the way it was made," he explains, referring to the solid construction, drawers that slide perfectly, and the exquisite velvet linings (today, washable suede is often used).

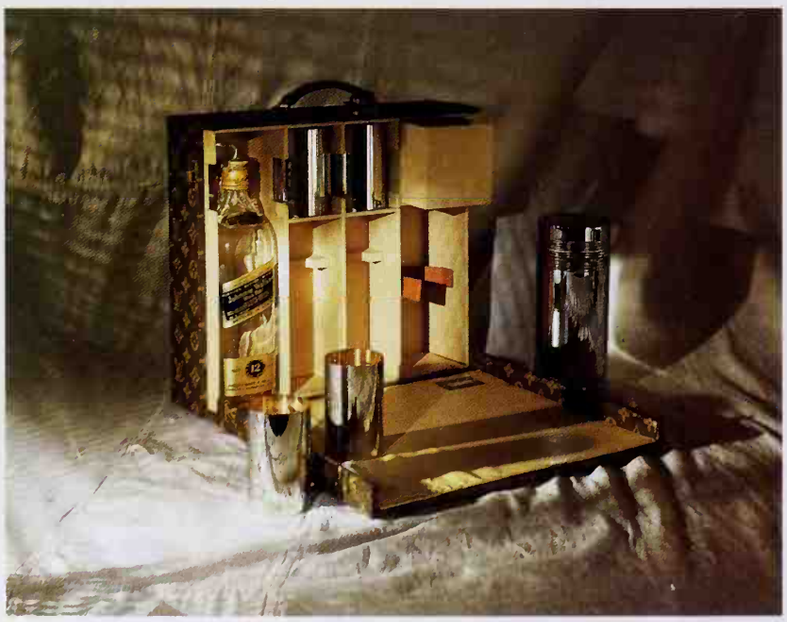
Vuitton trunks were once so ubiquitous that owners painted distinctive colored stripes on them to make identification easier at the dock. According to De Castro, stripe colors often corresponded to the racing stripes of a family's horses. Gonzalez owns many striped pieces, one being his MacLeish library box, which is banded with orange and green.

LV-monogrammed trunks and suitcases are the most common, says Gonzalez, who has never found anything more provocative than a Harlequin romance inside one. (De Castro, on the other hand, has found "honeymoon" trunks filled with trousseau items.) Gonzalez has paid as much as $4,000 for such unusual pieces as the very desirable secretaire, which opens to form a mini-office complete with desk and drawers. His oldest acquisition is a trunk-within-a-trunk, for which no purpose can be deduced.

He advises collectors to "get a sense of what they want to spend" before plunging into what he views as a generally overpriced market. "One thousand dollars for a suitcase is just too much," he believes, having seen and passed up such items at antiques shows. Nor will Gonzalez buy badly damaged pieces, although he was once tempted by a steamer trunk with a pristine silk interior but whose exterior had been damaged by paint stripping. "I almost bought it," he says, "but I caught myself."

Prices for large trunks generally range from the high hundreds to the low thousands, reasonable when one considers that a small brand-new footlocker costs $5,000. Some recent sales included two large steamer trunks from the estate of Irving Berlin, which reportedly sold for more than $3,000 each at a New York antiques shop. At a Sotheby's Arcade

This 1940s liquor case from the collection of George Hearn still has most of its original accessories.



PHOTOGRAPHED EXCLUSIVELY FOR CONNOISSEUR BY ROBERT BUTLER; TOP.

auction in 1990, five suitcases—including a shoe bag and a hat bag—from the estate of fashion doyenne Diana Vreeland sold for about $6,000, despite their poor condition. In the same year, three leather suitcases (from a set of fourteen) owned by the American composer Virgil Thomson went for $3,400. (Thomson had brought the entire set out of occupied France in 1940 when he crossed the border with Man Ray. "There was no reason not to take all my clothes," he wrote in his autobiography, "for I had bought winter suits and overcoats, had even borrowed money for that purpose, moved by an instinct, I suppose, toward facing disaster, should it come, well-dressed.")

The Vuitton Communication Center (see Sources) can date a piece that was made in France if records have survived. The company also often provides old trunks with new tumblers for their locks, but not with duplicate keys. Company policy forbids revealing the names of original owners—no matter how long gone. When a trunk is found locked, then, it can pose a dilemma, because, says Gonzalez, a seller will often not part with it until the contents are revealed; yet no one wants to break it open and cause damage. "Who knows if there's a million dollars inside?" he says of just such a trunk—an orange footlocker—that he longs to buy from a lady in Ohio.

If the day comes when the trunk is somehow miraculously opened and she decides to sell it, Gonzalez will most certainly make the trip in his station wagon to pick it up. He shudders to think back on his first flight. "A man called from Chicago to say he had a Louis trunk. I had anxiety for weeks about getting on that plane. When I brought the trunk back, the porter at the airport said to me, 'That's a nice Gucci.' " □

SOURCES

Auctions, estate sales, antiques dealers, flea markets.

Collector and dealer: Annette Agace De Castro, Stand 232, Alley 6, Paul Bert, Saint Ouen, France; 33-44-51-61-45.

Dealer: Florence Geller, 38 Main Street, Tarrytown, NY 10591; 914-631-4231.

Catalogs and Books

Bon Voyage: Designs for Travel. ***New York: Cooper-Hewitt Museum, 1986.***

A Journey Through Time: A Louis Vuitton Retrospective Exhibition. ***Paris: Louis Vuitton, 1983.***

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Museum (by appointment only)

Louis Vuitton Communication Center, 18 rue du Congrès, 92600, Asnières, France; 33-1-47-91-00-13.

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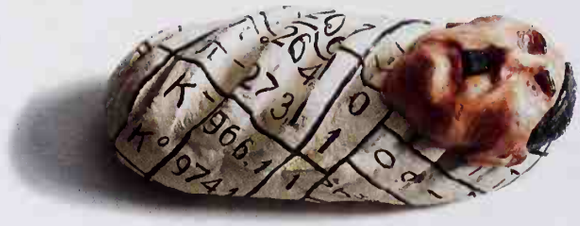


The Peppers, *Hitler Bread* (1989; loaf of bread with plastic head, painted enamel; 4½″ x 5″ x 11″).

RED-HOT PEPPERS

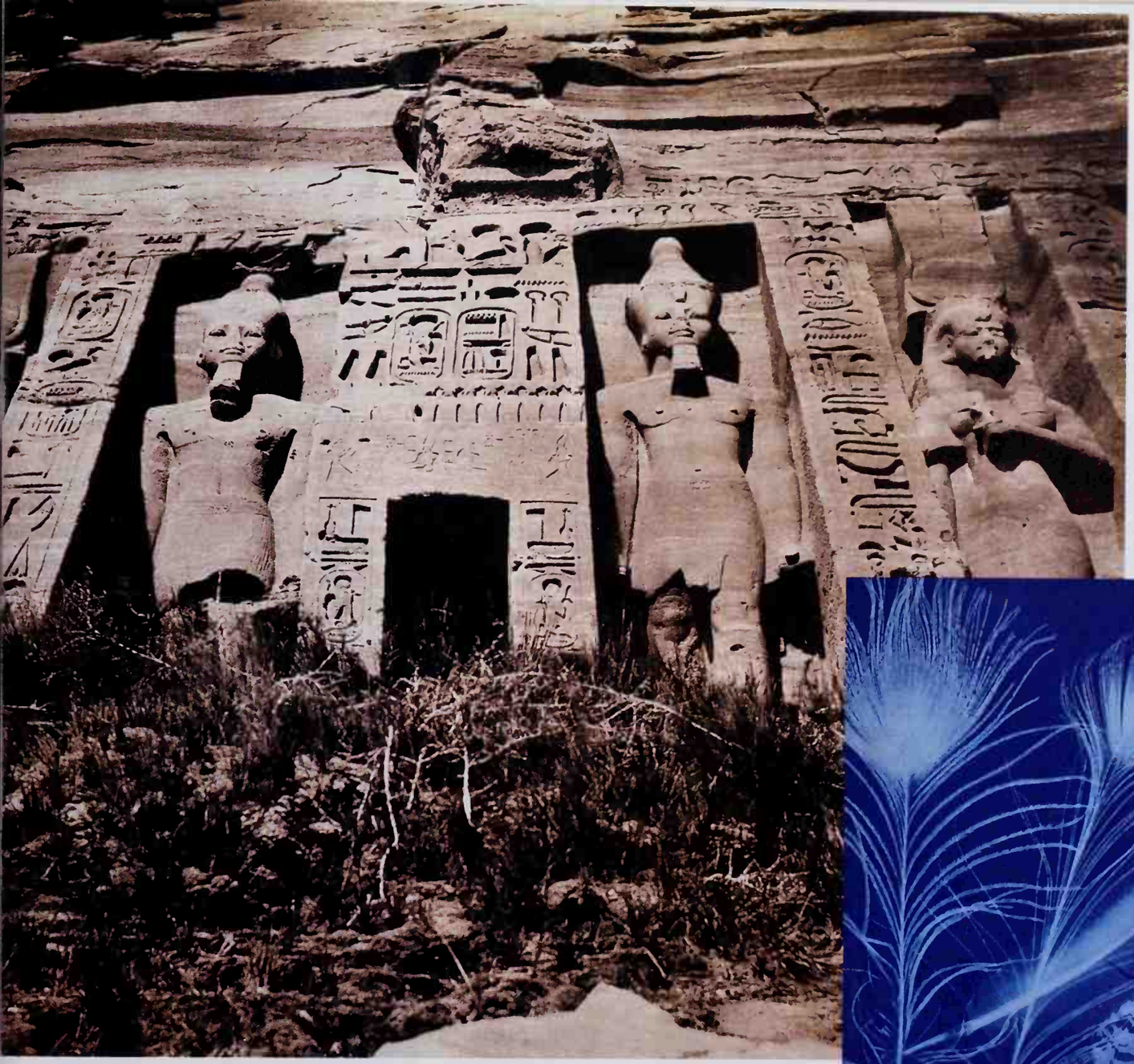
THE ODESSA-BORN HUSBAND-AND-WIFE TEAM OF Liudmila Skripkina and Oleg Petrenko, nicknamed the Peppers, creates conceptually based art by collaging Russian medical and scientific charts on top of extremely plain everyday objects. In one piece, a periodic table covering a loaf of bread is crowned with a miniature bust of Hitler; in another, gynecological data get stripped away to reveal painted mouths, metal pot lids, and the decapitated head of a plastic duck. The couple's work uses the artifacts of Soviet communism to suggest that scientific or economic rationality, when taken to extremes, becomes its own form of insanity. "The simplest functional things, such as tables and baskets, form a basic structure," explains Oleg. "They are almost mythological, almost alive." "The objects constantly shift in their meaning, depending on what we make of them," adds Liudmila.

The Peppers, both twenty-six, were part of a short-lived movement in Odessa called Medical Hermeneutics. Like most of the Russian artists who have recently become known in the West, the group followed international art trends through Western art magazines, often years out of date, that were passed from hand to hand in the years before glasnost. Since their work was shown only to peers and close friends, the artists developed a private language riddled with puns and coded references. The Peppers freely admit that an entire level of meaning is "completely lost" on Western viewers, who ironically constitute the major audience for their output. "The Soviets don't buy this kind of art," says Oleg. "In Odessa now, the artists show each other their Western catalogs."

At the Ronald Feldman Fine Arts gallery in New York City, where their work will be shown in September, the Peppers look pallid and somewhat out of place, overcoming their awkwardness through quasi-mystical pronouncements ("Our work is like the human body in reverse," says Oleg, "with the skeleton on the outside and the flesh beneath") and ironic commentaries on hometown life ("An Odessa newspaper just declared smoking good for one's health," notes Liudmila, reaching for a cigarette). Ronald Feldman, passing by as journalist and translator struggle through an interview with the couple, admonishes, "Don't believe anything they say —they're artists."—*D.P.*

Above: **Liudmila Skripkina and Oleg Petrenko ("The Peppers") in New York City, 1991.** ***Right:*** **The Peppers, *Medicinal Bile* (1989; three bottles, spackle-and-glue mixture with fish-eye lenses, enamel paint; bottles, 9″ x 3″ each).**

An exhibition of the Peppers' work (both recent and old) highlights the opening of the new Fundación San Germán, Casa Bahr, Calle José Julián Acosta, 19 San Germán, Puerto Rico 00753; 809-264-3211; through August 18. In September: Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, 31 Mercer Street, New York, NY 10013; 212-226-3232.



Left: **Félix Teynard, *Abou-Sembil Petit Speos—Partie Centrale de la Façade* (1851, salt print from a calotype negative, 9″ x 12″; plate 150 from *Égypte et Nubie*). *Below:* Anna Atkins, *Peacock* (1840s–50s, cyanotype photogram, approximately 10″ x 8″). Both available from Hans P. Kraus, Jr., Inc.**

PRIVATE DEALERS

WITH THE RECENT DOWNTURN IN THE ART MARKET, collecting has again become an intimate affair: *selectivity* is the word of the moment, and deals are being done quietly, without the late-eighties bombast of wild speculation and publicity. At the forefront of this return to old-fashioned principles is a new breed of private dealer. They usually live surrounded by the objects they sell, cutting costs by using their homes as exhibition spaces. Oftentimes they are driven by the innate urge to possess the material themselves—even if they must soon convert it into merchandise.

"I never get involved with any work of art unless I have a passion for it," says Edward Tyler Nahem, who sells Impressionist, modern, and contemporary works of art from his gallery in an Upper East Side town house, where he also lives. "I'd like to think that that makes me a better dealer, but you can get into trouble having the heart of a collector. I've often stuck my neck out by buying the work of artists I believe in. I think it pays off in the long run, but it's not always the best business decision." When acquiring art for himself, Nahem focuses on young contemporary painters and abstract expressionists, although he keeps professional purchases separate. "But there's not a painting in inventory that I wouldn't be proud to own," he admits, and his collector's instinct helps him to recognize undervalued artists. "In every generation, there are those whose work was somehow overshadowed," he says. "I'd rather have a first-rate Michael Goldberg than a fourth-rate de Kooning—and believe it or not, de Kooning did paint the occasional bad picture." To counteract what he calls "shopping-list collecting," Nahem brings clients to his private viewing rooms. "All you have to do is show them the work. As much as I enjoy talking about art, I don't believe in selling. Great paintings sell themselves."

Margot Gordon of the Aldega/Gordon Gallery, based in Manhattan, says, "I think clients like to see the works in a home environment. It gives them a feeling for how the works can be hung and what they are like to *(Continued on next page)*

Al Held, *P* (1959; acrylic on paper, laid down on Masonite; 29″ x 24″). From Edward Tyler Nahem Fine Art.

Yves Klein, *Blue Venus—S41* (1970, blue pigment in synthetic resin on plaster, 28″ high). From Edward Tyler Nahem Fine Art.

MORE PRIVATE DEALERS

live with." Gordon, a specialist in Italian drawings from the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries, believes that dealers must to some extent be collectors too. "It doesn't show much faith if you're dealing in a certain area and you don't keep some pieces for yourself," she insists.

Among this new breed of private dealer are those driven by their own obsessions to strike out into previously unexplored fields. Hans P. Kraus, Jr., for example, specializes in the terra incognita of early-nineteenth-century photography. On a recent evening in his Manhattan apartment cum office, the trim young dealer turns the oversize pages of Félix Teynard's 1858 book *Égypte et Nubie,* a pristine assemblage of 160 salt prints that Kraus and two colleagues recently purchased at a Paris sale for nearly $800,000, doubling the world auction record for a single lot of photographs. Kraus is well aware of the risks involved in leading a market into alien territory, but right now the bottom line is the farthest thing from his mind. "Oh, boy, look at that one," he says, turning to a dramatic study of ruins along the Nile and hopping from one foot to the other. "The narrative of that image is amazing. It has history, geometry, chaos, order. And look at the light! Teynard must have waited all day for the shadows to fall that way. And he didn't have a light meter.

Giacomo Zoboli, *Angel* (ca. 1740, black-and-white chalk on pink-apricot paper, 16″ x 10″). From the Aldega/Gordon Gallery.

"People are often surprised at the artistic sophistication of nineteenth-century photography," says Kraus, who grew up in a family of antiquarian-book dealers and whose father was famous for discovering a copy of the Gutenberg Bible. "Until recently, these images have been valued primarily as documents of the birth of the medium. But many of them are also beautiful works of art. There's not a large public for the early experimental works. Hardly any galleries show them, but I have a lot of faith in these images."

Despite his obvious delight in the material, Kraus insists he's primarily a dealer, not a collector. "A dealer has to offer his best material to his clients. Of course, it is difficult to part with some things, and I price them accordingly. If it's a really wrenching experience, then I set a high price. And I've never regretted any one of the pieces I've been stuck with," he says. "They're like old friends." —*Kenneth James*

Edward Tyler Nahem Fine Art; 212-517-2453.
Aldega/Gordon Gallery; 212-988-2965.
Hans P. Kraus, Jr., Inc.; 212-794-2064.

Museums

DUBLIN VISION

The Royal Hospital Kilmainham in Dublin, now the home of the Irish Museum of Modern Art.

IRELAND IS WELL-KNOWN AS A FOUNT OF LITERary genius, the country that even in the midst of social and political agonies spewed forth such writers as William Butler Yeats, James Joyce, and Samuel Beckett. Less well known is the nation's visual-arts tradition. Seeking to rectify this imbalance, the new Irish Museum of Modern Art (IMMA) opened last May in Dublin's former Royal Hospital Kilmainham, an aptly timed move for the city dubbed this year's European capital of culture by the European Economic Community.

Dubliners now have the opportunity to view paintings by such modern masters as Picasso, Miró, and Léger hanging alongside modern Irish masterpieces by Jack B. Yeats (brother of William), Paul Henry, and Louis Le Brocquy. The IMMA will also focus on contemporary art, exhibiting a top-level international sampling, as well as commissioning new works by Irish artists. Ireland has been seeking closer ties with continental Europe, and the new museum will help by creating a means for Ireland to enter the contemporary-art world. "The IMMA will provide a two-way platform on a scale not present here before," says director Declan McGonagle, "for Irish artists to be seen abroad and for international art to be seen here."

One of the museum's first commissions was for *Strongbow*, a video installation by the Irishman James Coleman. Richard Strongbow was a Norman conqueror who invaded the country in the twelfth century but whose descendants proudly adopted the Irish identity and defended it as fiercely as any of the country's original Celtic inhabitants. Strongbow also founded the first Knights Hospitallers, a charitable organization, on the site of the Royal Hospital Kilmainham. The piece expresses the IMMA's commitment to Irish traditions, linking modish video art to the country's complex history and to the museum's venerable setting.

Built in 1684 as a home for retired soldiers, the Royal Hospital Kilmainham is a classical building set on forty-eight acres of parkland. A beautiful structure designed in the style of the Invalides in Paris, it features a large, elegant courtyard and a formal facade. The building's extensive restoration in the mid-1980s won the Europa Nostra Prize for architectural conservation in 1986.

At the moment, three donated collections form an important part of the museum's holdings: Irish biscuit magnate Gordon Lambert's generous bequest of paintings and sculpture, both national and international; Australian artist Sidney Nolan's donation of his own cowboy-style paintings; and the Hooker O'Malley collection of Irish modernist art, donated through the Irish American Cultural Institute by the widow of one of the heros of the Easter Sunday Rebellion—the 1916 revolt that marked the beginning of Ireland's modern struggle for independence.

Loans from museums on the Continent are also essential to the IMMA's program. The Gemeentemuseum in The Hague, the Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven (also in the Netherlands), and the Klaus Lafrenz Collection in Hamburg have sent work by artists ranging from Mondrian to Ben Schonzeit and Hans Haacke. McGonagle expects other exchanges to be an important aspect of the museum's future. "Since we are starting from scratch, the IMMA will have to make itself part of the international circuit of galleries and museums," he explains. The IMMA's emphasis on contemporary art has taken many Dubliners by surprise, but McGonagle sees the new venue as an opportunity to make the international art community take note of Ireland. —*Joanne McGrath*

Left: **Kathy Prendergast, *Stack* (1989; string, paint, cloth; 105″ x 101″ x 27″). At the Irish Museum of Modern Art. *Above:* J. B. Yeats, *Clear Water* (1954, oil on canvas, 22″ x 29″). O'Malley Collection, Irish Museum of Modern Art.**

The Irish Museum of Modern Art, the Royal Hospital Kilmainham, Dublin 8, Ireland; 353-1-71866.

GALLERY OF HORROR

LONDON'S NATIONAL GALLERY has given birth. After an agonizing pregnancy and a protracted labor of more than fifty years, the swaddling clothes have been stripped away to reveal the new Sainsbury Wing, shivering in the subzero temperatures of a decidedly split reception. Although a few international critics have lauded the Robert Venturi–designed structure on Trafalgar Square as a major architectural achievement, the English press and public have reacted with nothing short of animosity, feeling that after the much-publicized attempt to find a suitable architect through an open competition, Venturi's offering is surely the runt of the litter.

British critics have savaged Venturi's new addition to London's National Gallery.

Actually, it's all Hitler's fault. If the Hampton Furniture Store had only survived the blitz of 1940, this entire problem would never have arisen and the National Gallery would simply have had to make do, shifting around uncomfortably like a fat cat in a cramped basket. As it is, the mere mention of the Hampton site conjures up a catalog of botched schemes and half-baked plans dogged by a succession of penny-pinching governments that ignored the problem with a catastrophic lack of vision. That this new wing should be christened in honor of the Sainsbury brothers—those grocery-store magnates who kicked in a munificent $63 million for the addition—is a shameful reminder of the nation's failure to get its priorities straight.

Sandro Botticelli (1445–1510), *Venus and Mars*, now in the National Gallery's extension.

The choice of Robert Venturi—headliner of the Philadelphia firm of Venturi, Scott Brown and Associates, Inc. and winner of this year's prestigious Pritzker award—must have seemed a safe one at the time. Champion of postmodernist whimsy, he presumably gets the imprimatur of a certain Royal Person whose fulminations on architecture routinely cause much merriment in the British press. But even Prince Charles must have initially reacted with revulsion to the mishmash that Venturi has produced. Details from the neoclassical design of William Wilkins's original facade have been slapped seemingly at random all over the sides of the new extension—Corinthian pilasters, segments of Doric friezes, scattered remnants of cornices, and even a liberal helping of polychrome Egyptian-style grilles, all crowned by an isolated column apparently aping the centerpiece of the square itself—no doubt intended as a riotously funny in-joke. Modernism may now be a dirty word, but is Lego the only answer to Le Corbusier?

British cognoscenti have been questioning the wisdom of Venturi's scheme ever since it was announced in 1987. E. M. Farrelly, an editor of the *Architectural Review*—possibly Britain's most esteemed architectural publication—wrote a damning critique of Venturi's initial plans, lambasting the architect's "glib, confectionary approach to architecture: Classicism regarded simply as an open basket of goodies to be plundered at will." As a parting shot, Farrelly coined a new term of architectural abuse for the addition: PGMM, or Parking Garage Mannerist Modern. In London's *Independent*, Henry Porter offered more fierce words on the gallery's new extension, trashing the appearance of the Sainsbury Wing as "a pastel power station constructed in the 1930s." In the *London Times*, Gavin Stamp added that "The National Gallery extension is the cruellest disappointment I have ever suffered as an architectural critic."

Those who have seen the interior mutter of a restrained blandness, for which, I suppose, one must be thankful. Pale gray walls and oak floors offer a safe foil for one of the world's most impressive collections of early Italian paintings. A cylindrical chamber links the Sainsbury Wing to its parent, from which a long gallery offers a vista right through the new extension—an attempt at imposed symmetry that fails dismally, given the peculiar rhomboid shape of

the new building. Add to that its focal point, a great altarpiece by Cima, which has been extensively restored by the gallery's conservation department, rousing heated debate.

On the up side, it must be admitted that the new wing houses a lecture theater, six temporary exhibition galleries, a small cinema, and a computerized information room, as well as a new gallery shop, brasserie, and coffee bar, to say nothing of the suite of top-lit galleries, enabling the National Gallery to exhibit a far greater proportion of its pictures than has previously been possible. All very commendable, but despite its grandiose staircases, glass-curtain walls, and vistas over Trafalgar Square, this addition is a resounding failure in both concept and design. One wonders why the bold entries by I. M. Pei (known for his elegant additions to the National Gallery in Washington, D.C., and to the Louvre in Paris) and high-tech guru Richard Rogers (one of the creators of the Pompidou Center in Paris and the amazing Lloyd's building in London) were so summarily rejected. Their structures suggest the wonderful opportunity that has been lost. Nothing Venturi, nothing gained? I'm not so sure. —*Robert Torday*

The National Gallery, Trafalgar Square, London WC2N 5DN; 44-71-839-3321.

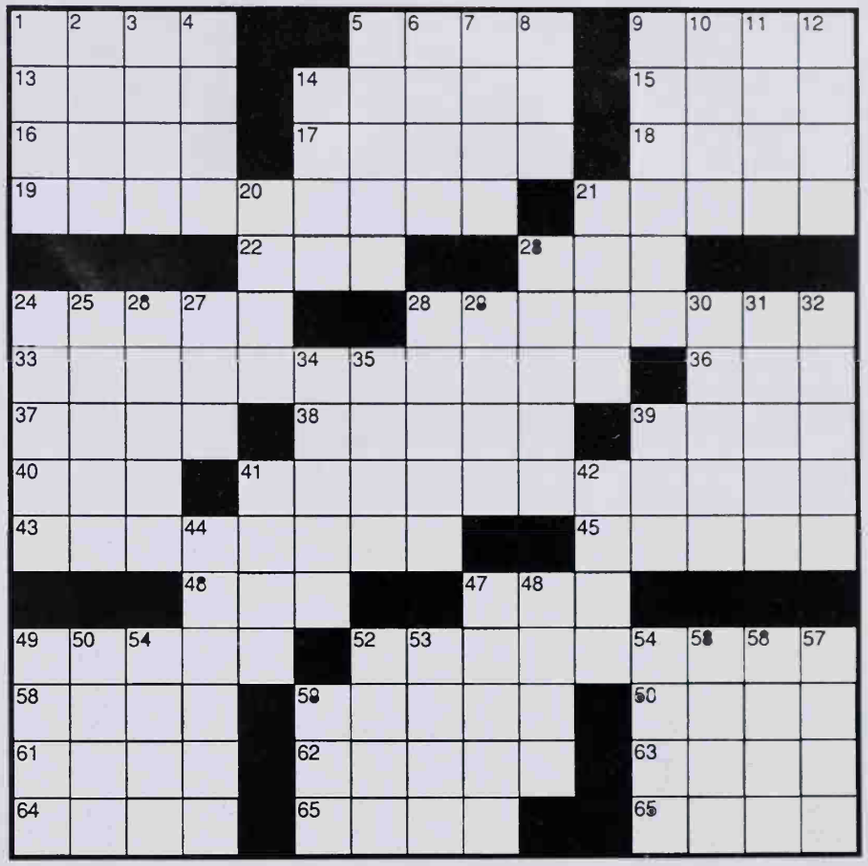
Dieric Bouts (ca. 1400–1475), *The Virgin and Child with Saints Peter and Paul*, has a new home.

CONNOISSEUR'S

crossword

FIRST RESORTS

by Michael Shenk



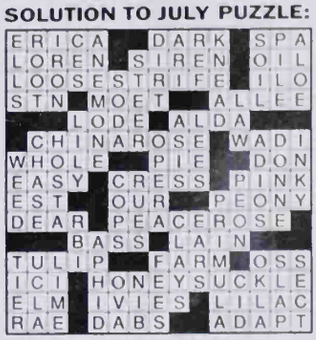
ACROSS

1 Enfeebles
5 _____ Head
9 Play group
13 Corner
14 Caravan stop
15 With 18 Across, Jamaican resort
16 Taj Mahal site
17 Racetracks
18 See 15 Across
19 Noël Coward played piano here
21 Fashions
22 Cyclades island
23 Pebble Beach target
24 San Rafael's county
28 Some call it Hawaii's finest beach
33 Philippine resort on the South China Sea
36 TV plugs
37 Saint Peter's has a big one
38 Worth
39 Quarter deck
40 With 21 Down, a George Harrison book
41 Resort known for its fascinating golf
43 Venezuelan national park on the Caribbean
45 Fuse
46 Craft for couples
47 Sailor
49 Resort west of Curaçao
52 Beautiful Bahamas beaches
58 Restrain
59 Mettle
60 Ready for customers
61 Greenish blue
62 Saint _____
63 Key _____
64 62 Across, for instance
65 Hot-weather refreshment
66 Limey rents his flat

DOWN

1 Headliner
2 Boat designed by Athena
3 Machu Picchu setting
4 Phenom Penn
5 Place to sample the Caribbean's simple life
6 Soviet sea
7 Audacity
8 Bro's sibling
9 Sun surrounder
10 Tart
11 Pump, for one
12 Fling
14 Hip Manhattan art scene
20 Fred and Wilma's pet
21 See 40 Across
23 Sail shoreward
24 Half note
25 Remember it
26 Globetrotter
27 Ross Sea sight
28 Inverness's firth
29 Like the Sahara
30 Waimea Canyon setting
31 Official decree
32 _____ *World Turns*
34 Studio garb
35 Kicked his wife to death
39 Coin of Malaysia
41 David Copperfield's first wife
42 Loni's love
44 Mob
47 Hiker's homes
48 Diving birds
49 Overture follower
50 Regrets
51 Europe-Asia border river
52 *Spartacus*, for example
53 Troubadour's instrument
54 Allen Ginsberg expresses himself
55 Olympics weapon
56 Goal of some vacationers
57 Picnic crashers
59 Get around in Squaw Valley

SOLUTION TO JULY PUZZLE:



Highland Fling: Scottish debutante Lady Louisa Campbell kicks up her heels at the 143rd annual Royal Caledonian Ball held in May at London's Grosvenor House hotel. The event raised money for Scottish schoolchildren.

Public Displays

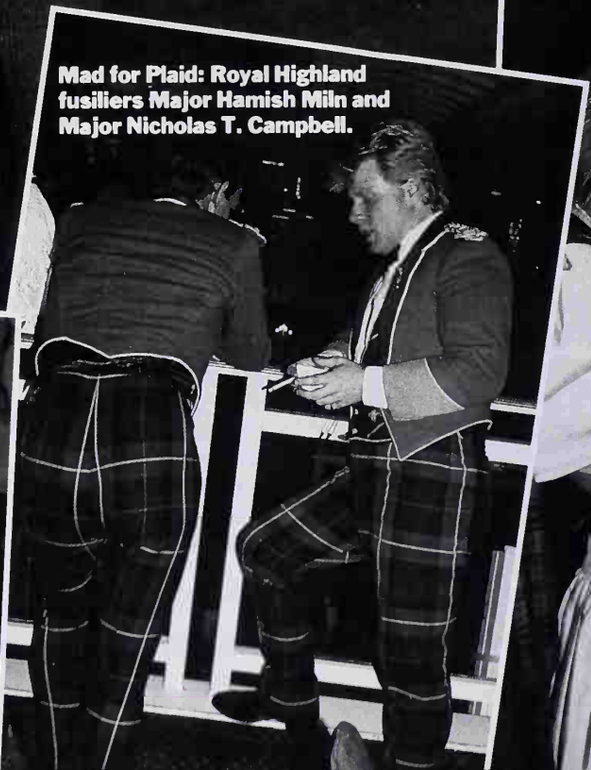
Photographs by Dafydd Jones

Lavish balls and extravagant fetes have become a thing of the past in nineties America, but in merry old England the fun's not over yet. From charity events like the Royal Caledonian Ball in London to carriage driving in Windsor (with horse trials, birthday bashes, and romantic nuptials in between), in Britain the parties are as lively as ever.

The Honorable Eliza Ramsay helps Lady Louisa Stuart with her dress.

Mrs. Mike Anderson takes a twirl.

The Honorable Mrs. Moncreiffe of Moncreiffe.



Mad for Plaid: Royal Highland fusiliers Major Hamish Miln and Major Nicholas T. Campbell.

dy Louisa Stuart
ispers to her date.

England's most eligible bachelor, the Marquess of Lorne.

Dressed to Kilt: The Duchess of Argyll chats with William Drummond Moray of Abercairny.

Clansman Lord Doune wearing a horsehair sporran.

Big Mac: Ranald Macdonald of Clanranald the younger.

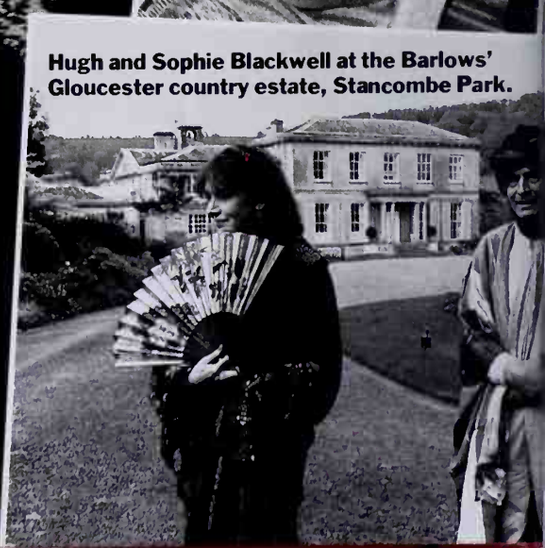
Public Displays

Thomas Messel (nephew of the late set designer Oliver Messel) and his wife, Pepe, dressed as characters from Alain-Fournier's novel *The Lost Domain*, celebrate at photographer Nic Barlow's fortieth-birthday fete last May.

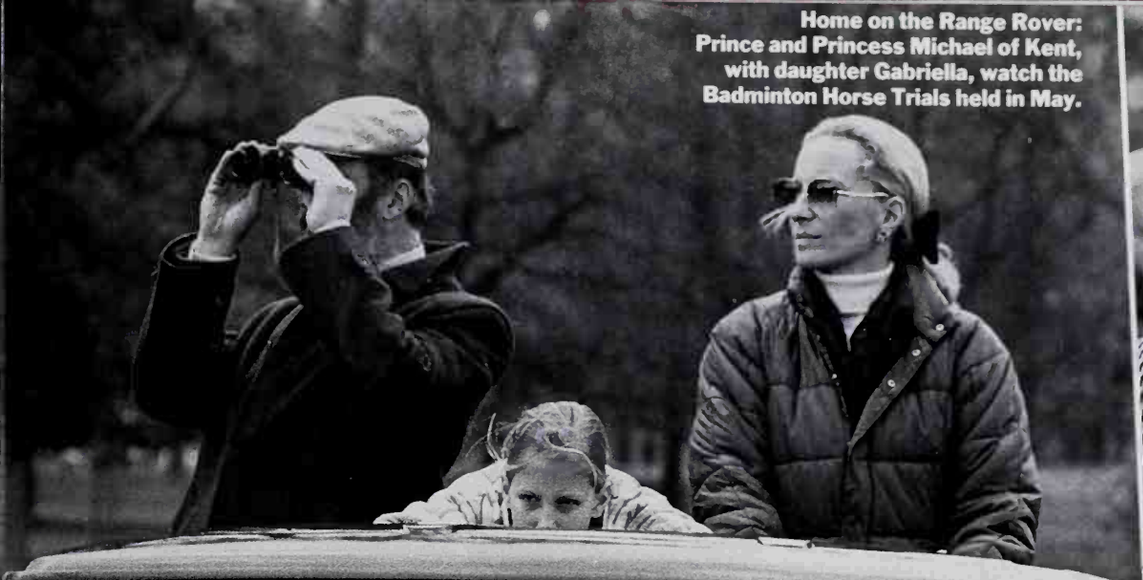
Nic Barlow makes a wish.

Cyra-nose: High-powered cinematographer Stephen Keith-Roach as a de Bergerac look-alike.

Nic's parents, Basil and Gerda Barlow, caught with the gifts.

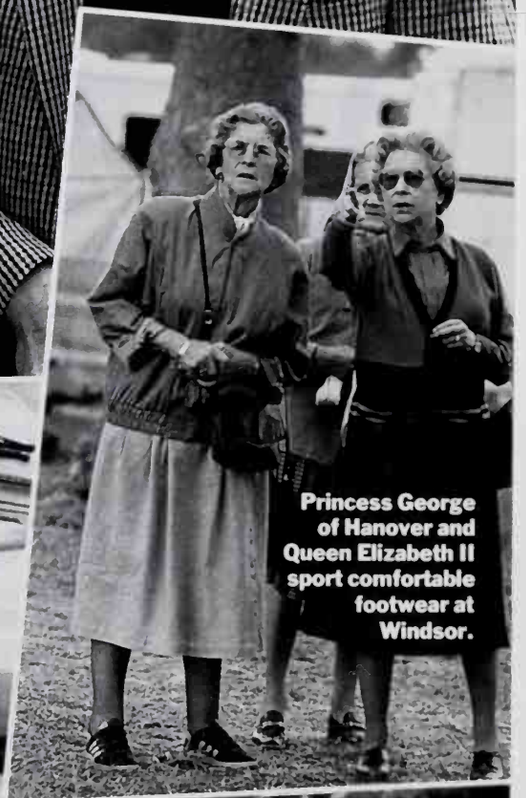


Hugh and Sophie Blackwell at the Barlows' Gloucester country estate, Stancombe Park.

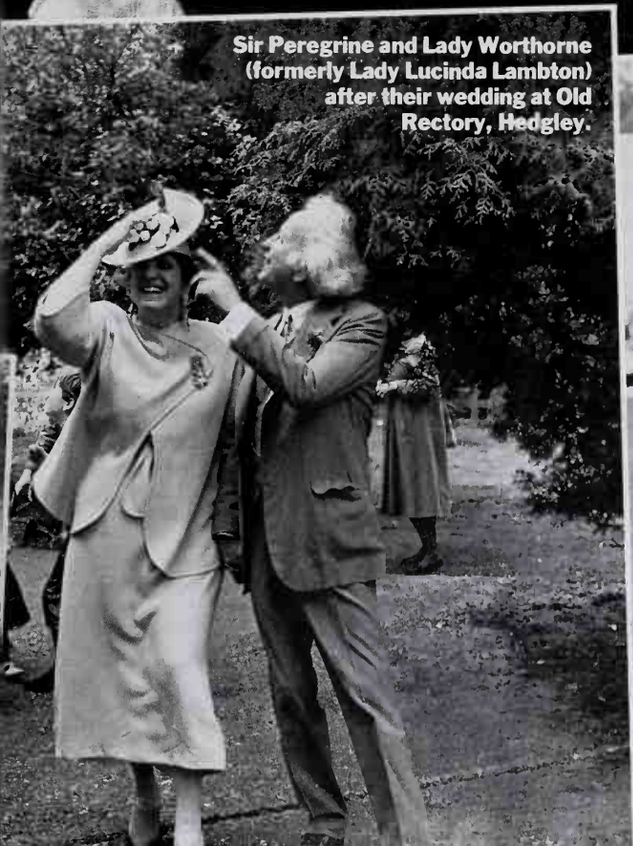


Home on the Range Rover: Prince and Princess Michael of Kent, with daughter Gabriella, watch the Badminton Horse Trials held in May.

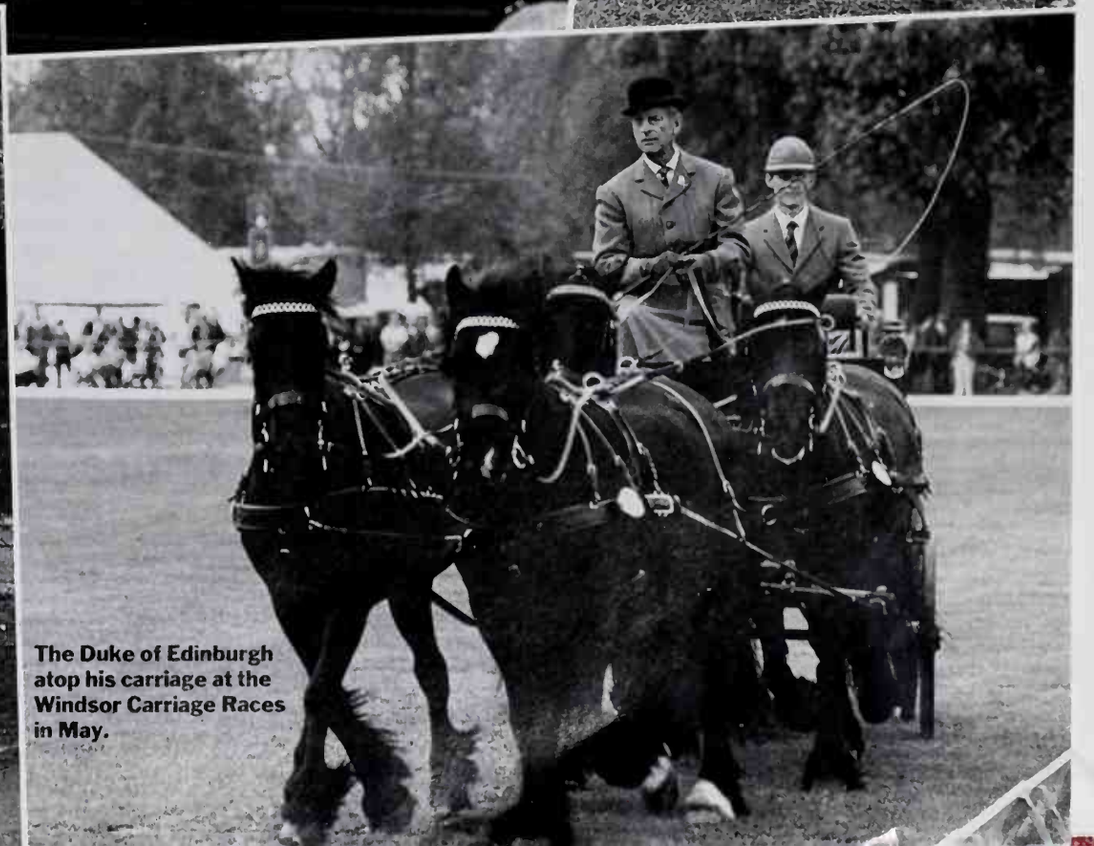
Captain Mark Phillips at Badminton.



Princess George of Hanover and Queen Elizabeth II sport comfortable footwear at Windsor.



Sir Peregrine and Lady Worthorne (formerly Lady Lucinda Lambton) after their wedding at Old Rectory, Hedgley.



The Duke of Edinburgh atop his carriage at the Windsor Carriage Races in May.

something to declare

RANTINGS AND RAVINGS FROM OUR JET-SETTING PLUTOCRAT

Whatever would we Americans do without our beloved sports? As a people, we are obsessed with winning. The Persian Gulf war, after all, was handicapped as closely as it was covered. Yet for all our gladiatorial pretensions, we're not a nation of sportsmen so much as sports watchers. In fact, in this country, sports is about as far removed from the Greek ideal of athletics as, say, Saddam Hussein is from compassion, or better yet, Donald Trump from humility.

Given that my Greek ancestors worshiped amateurism, I want to say a few words in defense of its nobility. Amateurs derive their fulfillment from the sheer pursuit of their athletic passion—what in the gambler's parlance is called the loving of the game. If you care about what you do, motivation follows posthaste. I know that I pour a lot more physical and mental vigor into my tennis game than I do into a run in the park. For me, one is a triumph, the other merely trying.

Doing what you *want* to do, as opposed to what a fat salary and wily management team dictate you must do, can have its felicitous results. This is as true of athletics as it is of service to one's country. Take the CIA, for example. Its forerunner, the Office of Strategic Services, conducted intelligence work in an admirable fashion decades before the age of Tom Clancy and John le Carré. And on the subject of government service, in America today, the states with the highest-paid legislators do not necessarily deliver the most bang for the tax buck.

The ultimate truth is that the amateur glories in his natural talent, the pro in his monetary reward. The amateur will try the hardest shot even though he may not be well practiced; the pro will go for the percentage. It makes more sense, but it also makes for a duller world. Not to mention a more dishonest and less romantic one. And if there's one thing we are badly in need of right now, it's a more romantic world.

Needless to say, the ancient Greeks—in their infinite wisdom—knew all this. Wars stopped when the Olympic Games began. And everyone competed in a spirit most unlike that of our current crop of greedy baseball and tennis heroes. These days cheating is often rationalized as outsmarting one's rivals. Baseball teams have been accused of stealing their opponents' signals from television cameras on the field. (In the last decade, didn't a handful of well-paid gentlemen get sent to the slammer for the Wall Street equivalent of this sleight of hand?) Not exactly the stuff of valor.

Well, in ancient Sparta, a warrior was expected to cheat and lie as long as he was not caught. In Athens, on the other hand, the citizens were taught to glorify the Greek ideal, which is the harmonious expression of human nature's higher reaches: beauty and integrity. The Spartans were today's professionals, the Athenians its amateurs.

Alas, professional sports is more important today than at any other time in our history. Just try to envision what life would be like without the idiot box's nonstop coverage of pro events. The networks and their myriad cable cousins practice media saturation of every conceivable event, enfeebling an already sports-demented public even more. Worse, the day will soon dawn when the renown that sportsmen handily accrue is routinely used as a political springboard. Imagine—if you dare—some baseball goon or hockey thug sitting in the White House deciding our future. (Of course, if the Bill Bradleys and Jack Kemps were the rule and not the exception, I would advocate as forcefully for the locker room as for the library in any presidential-prep curriculum.)

The real scandal of pro sports versus amateur lies in the college recruiting scam. That young men can graduate from places of learning and be unable to read and write is, for lack of a better word, criminal. It is incomprehensible to me, and should be to anyone with the merest hint of intelligence, why anyone should be paid for taking part in sports. Market forces, some would argue. But I say athletics should not be an entertainment for lazy people sitting in armchairs.

Rather, sports should be an arena of achievement for its own sake. Let's have more amateurs. Amen. □

BY TAKI

2413

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